

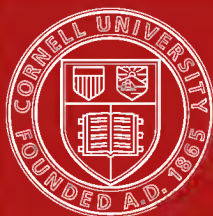


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Interview with Queen Elizabeth and the Dutch
Envoys

Edited by Alfred Frederick

Interview betw Queen Elizabeth and the Dutch
Envoys

From the diary of Alfred Fredericks

Edition de Luxe

The Complete Works of
John L. Motley

VOLUME VII



History of the United Netherlands
From the Death of William the Silent to the
Twelve Years' Truce, 1609

VOL. II
1585-1587

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THE UNITED NETHERLANDS

CHAPTER VII

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AT last the Earl of Leicester came. Embarking at Harwich, with a fleet of fifty ships, and attended "by the flower and chief gallants of England,"¹—the Lords Sheffield, Willoughby, North, Burroughs, Sir Gervase Clifton, Sir William Russell, Sir Robert Sydney, and others among the number,—the new lieutenant-general of the English forces in the Netherlands arrived on the 19th December, 1585, at Flushing. His nephew, Sir Philip Sydney, and Count Maurice of Nassau, with a body of troops and a great procession of civil functionaries, were in readiness to receive him, and to escort him to the lodgings prepared for him.²

Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, was then fifty-four years of age. There are few personages in English history whose adventures, real or fictitious, have been made more familiar to the world than his have been, or whose individuality has been presented in more picturesque fashion, by chronicle, tragedy, or romance. Born on the same day of the month and hour of the day with the queen, but two years before her birth, the supposed synastry of their destinies³ might partly account, in that age of astrological superstition, for the influence which

¹ Stow, 711.

² Bor, ii. 684, 685. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 133, 134. Wagenaer, viii. 112 seq. Stow. 711. Strada, ii. 408, 409.

³ Naunton, 34, and note.

he perpetually exerted. They had, moreover, been fellow-prisoners together in the commencement of the reign of Mary, and it is possible that he may have been the medium through which the indulgent expressions of Philip II. were conveyed to the Princess Elizabeth.

His grandfather, John Dudley, that "caterpillar of the commonwealth," who lost his head in the first year of Henry VIII. as a reward for the "grist which he brought to the mill"¹ of Henry VII.; his father, the mighty Duke of Northumberland, who rose out of the wreck of an obscure and ruined family to almost regal power, only to perish, like his predecessor, upon the scaffold, had bequeathed him nothing save rapacity, ambition, and the genius to succeed. But Elizabeth seemed to ascend the throne only to bestow gifts upon her favorite. Baronies and earldoms, stars and garters, manors and monopolies, castles and forests, church livings and college chancellorships, advowsons and sinecures, emoluments and dignities, the most copious and the most exalted, were conferred upon him in breathless succession. Wine, oil, currants, velvets, ecclesiastical benefices, university headships, licenses to preach, to teach, to ride, to sail, to pick, and to steal, all brought "grist to his mill." His grandfather, the "horse-leech and shearer," never filled his coffers more rapidly than did Lord Robert, the fortunate courtier. Of his early wedlock with the ill-starred Amy Robsart, of his nuptial projects with the queen, of his subsequent marriages and mock marriages with Douglas Sheffield and Lettice of Essex, of his plottings, poisonings, imaginary or otherwise, of his countless intrigues, amatory and political, of that luxuriant, creeping, flaunting, all-pervading ex-

¹ Expression of Lord Bacon.

istence which struck its fibers into the mold, and coiled itself through the whole fabric, of Elizabeth's life and reign—of all this the world has long known too much to render a repetition needful here. The inmost nature and the secret deeds of a man placed so high by wealth and station can be seen but darkly through the glass of contemporary record. There was no tribunal to sit upon his guilt. A grandee could be judged only when no longer a favorite, and the infatuation of Elizabeth for Leicester terminated only with his life. He stood now upon the soil of the Netherlands in the character of a "Messiah," yet he had been charged with crimes sufficient to send twenty humbler malefactors to the gibbet. "I think," said a most malignant arraigner of the man, in a published pamphlet, "that the Earl of Leicester hath more blood lying upon his head at this day, crying for vengeance, than ever had private man before, were he never so wicked."¹

Certainly the mass of misdemeanors and infamies hurled at the head of the favorite by that "green-coated Jesuit," Father Parsons, under the title of "Leycester's Commonwealth," were never accepted as literal verities; yet the value of the precept to calumniate boldly, with the certainty that much of the calumny would last forever, was never better illustrated than in the case of Robert Dudley. Besides the lesser delinquencies of filling his purse by the sale of honors and dignities, by violent ejectments from land, fraudulent titles, rapacious inclosures of commons, by taking bribes for matters of

¹ Leycester's Commonwealth: conceived, spoken, and published with most earnest protestation of all dutiful good will and affection toward the realm, for whose good only it is made common to many. By Robert Parsons (4to, London, 1641).

justice, grace, and supplication to the royal authority, he was accused of forging various letters to the queen, often to ruin his political adversaries, and of plottings to entrap them into conspiracies, playing first the comrade and then the informer. The list of his murders and attempts to murder was almost endless. "His Lordship hath a special fortune," saith the Jesuit, "that when he desireth any woman's favor, whatsoever person standeth in his way hath the luck to die quickly."¹ He was said to have poisoned Alice Drayton, Lady Lennox, Lord Sussex, Sir Nicholas Throgmorton, Lord Sheffield, whose widow he married and then poisoned, Lord Essex, whose widow he also married, and intended to poison, but who was said to have subsequently poisoned him, besides murders or schemes for murder of various other individuals, both French and English.² "He was a rare artist in poison," said Sir Robert Naunton,³ and certainly not Cæsar Borgia, nor his father or sister, was more accomplished in that difficult profession than was Dudley, if half the charges against him could be believed. Fortunately for his fame, many of them were proved to be false. Sir Henry Sydney, lord deputy of Ireland, at the time of the death of Lord Essex, having caused a diligent inquiry to be made into that dark affair, wrote to the council that it was usual for the earl to fall into a bloody flux when disturbed in his mind, and that his body when opened showed no signs of poison.⁴ It is true that Sir Henry, although an honorable man, was Leicester's brother-in-law, and that perhaps an autopsy

¹ Leycester's Commonwealth, ubi sup.

² Ibid.

³ Naunton, Regalia, 43, 44.

⁴ Sydney Papers, by Collins, i. 48.

was not conducted at that day in Ireland on very scientific principles.

His participation in the strange death of his first wife was a matter of current belief among his contemporaries. "He is infamed by the death of his wife," said Burghley,¹ and the tale has since become so interwoven with classic and legendary fiction, as well as with more authentic history, that the phantom of the murdered Amy Robsart is sure to arise at every mention of the earl's name. Yet a coroner's inquest—as appears from his own secret correspondence with his relative and agent at Cumnor—was immediately and persistently demanded by Dudley. A jury was impaneled, every man of them a stranger to him, and some of them enemies. Antony Forster, Appleyard, and Arthur Robsart, brother-in-law and brother of the lady, were present, according to Dudley's special request; "and if more of her friends could have been sent," said he, "I would have sent them"; but with all their minuteness of inquiry, "they could find," wrote Blount, "no presumptions of evil," although he expressed a suspicion that "some of the jurymen were sorry that they could not." That the unfortunate lady was killed by a fall down-stairs was all that could be made of it by a coroner's inquest, rather hostile than otherwise, and urged to rigorous investigation by the supposed culprit himself.² Nevertheless, the calumny has endured for three centuries, and is likely to survive as many more.

Whatever crimes Dudley may have committed in the

¹ Lodge, ii. 202.

² Abstract of the correspondence, preserved in the Pepysian Library at Cambridge, between Lord Robert Dudley and Thomas Blount, an agent of his at Cumnor, during the inquest held on Amy Robsart, published in Craik, *Romance of the Peerage*.

course of his career, there is no doubt whatever that he was the most abused man in Europe. He had been deeply wounded by the Jesuit's artful publication, in which all the misdeeds with which he was falsely or justly charged were drawn up in awful array, in a form half colloquial, half judicial. "You had better give some contentment to my Lord Leicester," wrote the French envoy from London to his government, "on account of the bitter feelings excited in him by these villainous books lately written against him."¹

The earl himself ascribed these calumnies to the Jesuits, to the Guise faction, and particularly to the Queen of Scots. He was said, in consequence, to have vowed an eternal hatred to that most unfortunate and most intriguing princess. "Leicester has lately told a friend," wrote Charles Paget, "that he will persecute you to the uttermost, for that he supposeth your Majesty to be privy to the setting forth of the book against him."² Nevertheless, calumniated or innocent, he was at least triumphant over calumny. Nothing could shake his hold upon Elizabeth's affections. The queen scorned but resented the malignant attacks upon the reputation of her favorite. She declared "before God and in her conscience that she knew the libels against him to be most scandalous, and such as none but an incarnate devil himself could dream to be true." His power, founded not upon genius nor virtue, but upon woman's caprice, shone serenely above the gulf where there had

¹ ". . . il sera bon de donner quelque contentement au dict sieur Conte de Lestre pour ce qu'il a sy affection de ces vilains livres fetz contre luy," etc.—Castelnau-Mauvissière à M. de Brulart, Brienne MS.

² Charles Paget to Queen of Scots, January 14, 1585, in Murdin, ii. 437.

been so many shipwrecks. "I am now passing into another world," said Sussex, upon his death-bed, to his friends, "and I must leave you to your fortunes; but beware of the Gipsy, or he will be too hard for you. You know not the beast so well as I do."¹

The "Gipsy," as he had been called from his dark complexion, had been renowned in youth for the beauty of his person, being "tall and singularly well-featured, of a sweet aspect, but high-foreheaded, which was of no discommendation," according to Naunton. The queen, who had the passion of her father for tall and proper men, was easier won by externals, from her youth even to the days of her dotage, than befitted so very sagacious a personage. Chamberlains, squires of the body, carvers, cup-bearers, gentlemen ushers, porters, could obtain neither place nor favor at court unless distinguished for stature, strength, or extraordinary activity. To lose a tooth had been known to cause the loss of a place, and the excellent constitution of leg which helped Sir Christopher Hatton into the chancellorship was not more remarkable, perhaps, than the success of similar endowments in other contemporaries. Leicester, although stately and imposing, had passed his summer solstice. A big, bulky man, with a long red face, a bald head, a defiant, somewhat sinister eye, a high nose, and a little torrent of foam-white, curly beard, he was still magnificent in costume. Rustling in satin and feathers, with jewels in his ears, and his velvet toque stuck as airily as ever upon the side of his head, he amazed the honest Hollanders, who had been used to less gorgeous chieftains. "Everybody is wondering at the great magnificence and splendor of his clothes,"² said the

¹ Naunton, 49.

² Bor, ii. 685.

plain chronicler of Utrecht. For, not much more than a year before, Fulke Greville had met at Delft a man whose external adornments were simpler—a somewhat slipshod personage, whom he thus portrayed: “His uppermost garment was a gown,” said the euphuistic Fulke, “yet such as, I confidently affirm, a mean-born student of our Inns of Court would not have been well disposed to walk the streets in. Unbuttoned his doublet was, and of like precious matter and form to the other. His waistcoat, which showed itself under it, not unlike the best sort of those woolen knit ones which our ordinary barge-watermen row us in. His company about him, the burgesses of that beer-brewing town. *No external sign of degree could have discovered the inequality of his worth or estate from that multitude.* Nevertheless, upon conversing with him, *there was an outward passage of inward greatness.*”¹

Of a certainty there must have been an outward passage of inward greatness about him, for the individual in unbuttoned doublet and bargeman’s waistcoat was no other than *William the Silent*. A different kind of leader had now descended among those rebels, yet it would be a great mistake to deny the capacity or vigorous intentions of the magnificent earl, who certainly was like to find himself in a more difficult and responsible situation than any he had yet occupied.

And now began a triumphal progress through the land, with a series of mighty banquets and festivities, in which no man could play a better part than Leicester. From Flushing he came to Middelburg, where, upon Christmas eve (according to the new reckoning), there was an entertainment, every dish of which has been duly

¹ Brooke’s Sydney, 16 seq.

chronicled. Pigs served on their feet, pheasants in their feathers, and baked swans with their necks thrust through gigantic pie-crust; crystal castles of confectionery, with silver streams flowing at their base, and fair virgins leaning from the battlements, looking for their new English champion; "wine in abundance, variety of all sorts, and wonderful welcomes"¹—such was the bill of fare. The next day the lieutenant-general returned the compliment to the magistrates of Middelburg with a tremendous feast. Then came an interlude of unexpected famine; for as the earl sailed with his suite in a fleet of two hundred vessels for Dort,—a voyage of not many hours' usual duration,—there descended a mighty frozen fog upon the waters, and they lay five whole days and nights in their ships, almost starved with hunger and cold, offering in vain "a pound of silver for a pound of bread."² Emerging at last from this dismal predicament, he landed at Dort, and so went to Rotterdam and Delft, everywhere making his way through lines of musketeers and civic functionaries, amid roaring cannon, pealing bells, burning cressets, blazing tar-barrels, fiery-winged dragons, wreaths of flowers, and Latin orations.³

The farther he went the braver seemed the country, and the better beloved his Lordship. Nothing was left undone, in the language of ancient chronicle, to fill the bellies and the heads of the whole company. At the close of the year he came to The Hague, where the festivities were unusually magnificent. A fleet of barges was sent to escort him. Peter, James, and John

¹ Stow's *Holinshed*, iv. 641.

² Sir John Conway to —, December 27, 1585, S. P. Office MS.

³ *Ibid.* Stow, *ubi sup.*

met him upon the shore, while the Saviour appeared walking upon the waves, and ordered his disciples to cast their nets and to present the fish to his Excellency. Farther on, he was confronted by Mars and Bellona, who recited Latin odes in his honor. Seven beautiful damsels upon a stage, representing the United States, offered him golden keys; seven others equally beautiful, embodying the seven sciences, presented him with garlands, while an enthusiastic barber adorned his shop with sevenscore of copper basins, with a wax-light in each, together with a rose, and a Latin posy in praise of Queen Elizabeth.¹ Then there were tiltings in the water between champions mounted upon whales and other monsters of the deep,—representatives of siege, famine, pestilence, and murder,—the whole interspersed with fireworks, poetry, charades, and harangues. Not Matthias, nor Anjou, nor King Philip, nor the Emperor Charles,² in their triumphal progresses, had been received with more spontaneous or more magnificent demonstrations. Never had the living pictures been more startling, the allegories more incomprehensible, the banquets more elaborate, the orations more tedious. Beside himself with rapture, Leicester almost assumed the god. In Delft, a city which he described as “another London almost for beauty and fairness,”³ he is said so far to have forgotten himself as to declare that his family

¹ Stow's *Holinshed*, iv. 641 seq.

² “It is thought that when Charles V. made his entries here in these towns there was not greater ceremonies; the people so joyful, and thronging so great, to see his Lordship, as it was wonder,” etc.—Edward Burnham to Sir F. Walsingham, December 27, 1585, S. P. Office MS.

³ Leicester to Walsingham, December 26, 1585, in Bruce, p. 31; and writing to Burghley the next day, he says: “The other towns

had, in the person of Lady Jane Grey, his father and brother, been unjustly deprived of the crown of England—an indiscretion which caused a shudder in all who heard him.¹ It was also very dangerous for the lieutenant-general to exceed the bounds of becoming modesty at that momentous epoch. His power, as we shall soon have occasion to observe, was anomalous, and he was surrounded by enemies. He was not only to grapple with a rapidly developing opposition in the states, but he was surrounded with masked enemies, whom he had brought with him from England. Every act and word of his were liable to closest scrutiny, and likely to be turned against him. For it was most characteristic of that intriguing age that even the astute Walsingham, who had an eye and an ear at every keyhole in Europe, was himself under closest domestic inspection. There was one Poley, a trusted servant of Lady Sydney, then living in the house of her father, Walsingham, during Sir Philip's absence, who was in close communication with Lord Montjoy's brother, Blount, then high in favor of Queen Elizabeth,—“whose grandmother she might be for his age and hers,”—and with another brother, Christopher Blount, at that moment in confidential attendance upon Lord Leicester in Holland. Now, Poley and both the Blounts were, in reality, papists, and in intimate correspondence with the agents of the Queen of Scots, both at home and abroad, although “forced to fawn upon Leicester, to see if they might thereby live quiet.” They had a secret “alphabet,” or cipher, among them, and protested warmly that they “honored the

I have passed by are very goodly towns, but this is the fairest of them all.”—S. P. Office MS.

¹ Hoofd, Vervolgh, 134.

ground whereon Queen Mary trod better than Leicester with all his generation, and that they felt bound to serve her who was the only saint living on the earth.”¹

It may be well understood, then, that the earl's position was a slippery one, and that great assumption might be unsafe. “He taketh the matter upon him,” wrote Morgan to the Queen of Scots, “as though he were an absolute king; but he hath many personages about him of good place out of England, the best number whereof desire nothing more than his confusion. Some of them be gone with him to avoid the persecution for religion in England. My poor advice and labor shall not be wanting to give Leicester all dishonor, which will fall upon him in the end with shame enough, though for the present he be very strong.”² Many of these personages of good place, and enjoying “charge and credit” with the earl, had very serious plans in their heads. Some of them meant, “for the service of God and the advantage of the King of Spain, to further the delivery of some notable towns in Holland and Zealand to the said king and his ministers,”³ and we are like to hear of these individuals again.

Meantime the Earl of Leicester was at The Hague. Why was he there? What was his work? Why had Elizabeth done such violence to her affection as to part with her favorite-in-chief, and so far overcome her thrift as to furnish forth—rather meagerly, to be sure—that little army of Englishmen? Why had the flower of England's chivalry set foot upon that dark and bloody ground, where there seemed so much disaster to encounter, and so little glory to reap? Why had England

¹ Morgan to Queen of Scots, in Murdin, ii. 495-501.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

thrown herself so heroically into the breach, just as the last bulwarks were falling which protected Holland from the overwhelming onslaught of Spain? It was because Holland was the threshold of England; because the two countries were one by danger and by destiny; because the naval expedition from Spain against England was already secretly preparing; because the deposed tyrant of Spain intended the provinces, when again subjugated, as a stepping-stone to the conquest of England; because the naval and military forces of Holland—her numerous ships, her hardy mariners, her vast wealth, her commodious seaports close to the English coast—if made Spanish property would render Philip invincible by sea and land; and because the downfall of Holland and of Protestantism would be death to Elizabeth and annihilation to England.

There was little doubt on the subject in the minds of those engaged in this expedition. All felt most keenly the importance of the game in which the queen was staking her crown, and England its national existence.

“I pray God,” said Wilford, an officer much in Walsingham’s confidence, “that I live not to see this enterprise quail, and with it the utter subversion of religion throughout all Christendom. It may be I may be judged to be afraid of my own shadow. God grant it be so. But if her Majesty had not taken the helm in hand, and my Lord of Leicester sent over, this country had been gone ere this. . . . This war doth defend England. Who is he that will refuse to spend his life and living in it? If her Majesty consume twenty thousand men in the cause, the experimented men that will remain will double that strength to the realm.”¹

¹ Thomas Wilford to Walsingham, December 15 (25), 1585, S. P. Office MS.

This same Wilford commanded a company in Ostend, and was employed by Leicester in examining the defenses of that important place. He often sent information to the secretary, "troubling him with the rude style of a poor soldier, being driven to scribble in haste." He reiterated in more than one letter the opinion that twenty thousand men consumed in the war would be a saving in the end, and his own determination, although he had intended retiring from the military profession, to spend not only his life in the cause, but also the poor living that God had given him. "Her Highness hath now entered into it," he said; "the fire is kindled; whosoever suffers it to go out, it will grow dangerous to that side. The whole state of religion is in question, and the realm of England also, if this action quail. *God grant we never live to see that doleful day.* Her Majesty hath such footing now in these parts as I judge it impossible for the king to weary her out, if every man will put to the work his helping hand, whereby it may be lustily followed, and the war not suffered to cool. *The freehold of England will be worth but little if this action quail,* and therefore I wish no subject to spare his purse toward it."¹

Spain moved slowly. Philip the Prudent was not sudden or rash, but his whole life had proved, and was to prove, him inflexible in his purposes, and patient in his attempts to carry them into effect, even when the purposes had become chimerical and the execution impossible. Before the fall of Antwerp he had matured his scheme for the invasion of England in most of its details, a necessary part of which was of course the

¹ Thomas Wilford to Walsingham, December 15 (25), 1585, S. P. Office MS.

reduction of Holland and Zealand. "Surely no danger nor fear of any attempt can grow to England," wrote Wilford, "so long as we can hold this country good." But never was honest soldier more mistaken than he when he added: "The papists will make her Highness afraid of a great fleet now preparing in Spain. We hear it also, but it is only a scarecrow to cool the enterprise here."¹

It was no scarecrow. On the very day on which Wilford was thus writing to Walsingham, Philip II. was writing to Alexander Farnese. "The English," he said, "with their troops, having gained a footing in the islands [Holland and Zealand], give me much anxiety. The English Catholics are imploring me with much importunity to relieve them from the persecution they are suffering. When you sent me a plan, with the coasts, soundings, quicksands, and ports of England, you said that the enterprise of invading that country should be deferred till we had reduced the isles; that, having them, we could much more conveniently attack England; or that at least we should wait till we had got Antwerp. As the city is now taken, I want your advice *now* about the invasion of England. To cut the root of the evils constantly growing up there, both for God's service and mine, is desirable. So many evils will thus be remedied, which would not be by only warring with the islands. It would be an uncertain and expensive war to go to sea for the purpose of chastising the insolent English corsairs, however much they deserve chastisement. I charge you to be secret, to give the matter your deepest attention, and to let me have your opinions at once." Philip then added a postscript, in his own

¹ Wilford to Burghley, December 18 (28), 1585, S. P. Office MS.

hand, concerning the importance of acquiring a seaport in Holland as a basis of operations against England. "Without a port," he said, "we can do nothing whatever."¹

A few weeks later the grand commander of Castile, by Philip's orders, and upon subsequent information received from the Prince of Parma, drew up an elaborate scheme for the invasion of England, and for the government of that country afterward—a program according to which the king was to shape his course for a long time to come. The plot was an excellent plot,—nothing could be more artistic, more satisfactory to the prudent monarch,—but time was to show whether there might not be some difficulty in the way of its satisfactory development.

"The enterprise," said the commander, "ought certainly to be undertaken as serving the cause of the Lord. From the pope we must endeavor to extract a promise of the largest aid we can get for the time when the enterprise can be undertaken. We must not declare that time, however, in order to keep the thing a secret, and because perhaps thus more will be promised, under the impression that it will never take effect."² He added that the work could not well be attempted before August or September of the following year, the only fear of such delay being that the French could hardly be kept

¹ "Porque sin puerto no se puede hacer nada."—Philip II. to Parma, December 29, 1585, Archivo de Simancas MS.

² Parecer del Comendador Mayor dado a S. M. sobre la empresa de Inglaterra, anno 1586, Archivo de Simancas MS.

"Y al papa se procure sacar promosa de la mas gruesa ayuda que se pudiese para cuando se puede hacer la empresa, sin declararle el tiempo, por respeto del secreto, y porque quiza asi prometera mas, pensando que no ha de haber efecto."

during all that time in a state of revolt.¹ For this was a uniform portion of the great scheme. France was to be kept, at Philip's expense, in a state of perpetual civil war, its every city and village to be the scene of unceasing conflict and bloodshed, subjects in arms against king, and family against family, and the Netherlands were to be ravaged with fire and sword; all this in order that the path might be prepared for Spanish soldiers into the homes of England. So much of misery to the whole human race was it in the power of one painstaking elderly valetudinarian to inflict, by never for an instant neglecting the business of his life.

Troops and vessels for the English invasion ought, in the commander's opinion, to be collected in Flanders, under color of an enterprise against Holland and Zealand, while the armada to be assembled in Spain, of galleons, galeazas, and galleys, should be ostensibly for an expedition to the Indies.

Then, after the conquest, came arrangements for the government of England. Should Philip administer his new kingdom by a viceroy, or should he appoint a king out of his own family? On the whole, the chances for the Prince of Parma seemed the best of any. "We must liberate the Queen of Scotland," said the grand commander, "and marry her to some one or another, both in order to put her out of love with her son, and to conciliate her devoted adherents. Of course the husband should be one of your Majesty's nephews, and none could be so appropriate as the Prince of Parma, that great captain, whom his talents, and the part he has to bear in the business, especially indicate for that honor."²

¹ "No se pueden tener tanto tiempo rebneltos."—Parecer del Comendador Mayor, etc., MS. before cited.

² Ibid.

Then there was a difficulty about the possible issue of such a marriage. The Farneses claimed Portugal, so that children sprung from the blood royal of England blended with that of Parma might choose to make those pretensions valid. But the objection was promptly solved by the commander. "The Queen of Scotland is sure to have no children," he said.¹

That matter being adjusted, Parma's probable attitude as King of England was examined. It was true his ambition might cause occasional uneasiness, but then he might make himself still more unpleasant in the Netherlands. "If your Majesty suspects him," said the commander, "which, after all, is unfair, seeing the way in which he has been conducting himself, it is to be remembered that in Flanders are similar circumstances and opportunities, and that he is well armed, much beloved in the country, and that the natives are of various humors. The English plan will furnish an honorable departure for him out of the provinces, and the principle of loyal obligation will have much influence over so chivalrous a knight as he, when he is once placed on the English throne. Moreover, as he will be new there, he will have need of your Majesty's favor to maintain himself, and there will accordingly be good correspondence with Holland and the islands. Thus your Majesty can put the Infanta and her husband into full possession of all the Netherlands, having provided them with so excellent a neighbor in England, and one so closely bound and allied to them. Then, as he is to have no English children" (we have seen that the commander had settled

¹ ". . . deshace esta sombra, que como no ha de tener hijos la Reyna de Escocia."—Parecer del Comendador Mayor, etc., MS. before cited.

that point), "he will be a very good mediator to arrange adoptions,¹ especially if you make good provision for his son Rainuccio in Italy. The reasons in favor of this plan being so much stronger than those against it, it would be well that your Majesty should write clearly to the Prince of Parma, directing him to conduct the enterprise [the English invasion], and to give him the first offer for this marriage [with Queen Mary] if he likes the scheme. If not, he had better mention which of the archdukes should be substituted in his place."²

There happened to be no lack of archdukes at that period for anything comfortable that might offer,—such as a throne in England, Holland, or France,—and the Austrian house was not remarkable for refusing convenient marriages; but the immediate future only could show whether Alexander I. of the house of Farnese was to reign in England, or whether the next king of that country was to be called Matthias, Maximilian, or Ernest of Hapsburg.

Meantime the grand commander was of opinion that the invasion project was to be pushed forward as rapidly and as secretly as possible, because, before any one of Philip's nephews could place himself upon the English throne, it was first necessary to remove Elizabeth from that position. Before disposing of the kingdom, the

¹ "Y esta es honrada salida y que a el le obligaria mucho en ley de tan gran caballero; de mas, como nuevo, para mantenerse en Inglaterra habia menester el favor de V. M. Y en entronizandose el alli, no faltaria concierto en Hollanda y las Islas, y podria V. M. meter en llena possession de todos los estados bajos a la Senora Infanta y su marido, dandoles tan buen vecino y tan obligado; y el no habiendo de tener hijos en Inglaterra, podria ser buen medianero para adopciones," etc.—Parecer del Comendador Mayor, etc., MS. before cited.

² Ibid.

preliminary step of conquering it was necessary. Afterward it would be desirable, without wasting more time than was requisite, to return with a large portion of the invading force out of England, in order to complete the conquest of Holland. For, after all, England was to be subjugated only as a portion of one general scheme, the main features of which were the reannexation of Holland and "the islands," and the acquisition of unlimited control upon the seas.

Thus the invasion of England was no "scarecrow," as Wilford imagined, but a scheme already thoroughly matured. If Holland and Zealand should meantime fall into the hands of Philip, it was no exaggeration on that soldier's part to observe that "the freehold of England would be worth but little."¹

¹ Upon that point there was no difference of opinion. The statesmen and soldiers of England were unanimous. "If I should not," said Burghley, "with all the powers of my heart, continually both wish and work advancement unto this action, I were an accursed person in the sight of God; considering the ends thereof tend to the glory of God, to the safety of the queen's person, to the preservation of this realm in a perpetual quietness, wherein, for my particular interest, both for myself and my posterity, I have as much interest as any of my degree."—Bruce, Leye. Corresp., p. 24.

Walsingham had been straightforward from the first in his advocacy of the Netherland cause, which he knew to be identical with that of England, and, as we have seen, had been often indignant at the shufflings practised by the queen's government in the matter. He was sincerely glad that Leicester had gone to the provinces before it was quite too late. "All honest and well-affected subjects," said he to the earl, "have cause to thank God that you arrived there so seasonably as you did; for howsoever we mislike of the enterprise here, *all England should have smarted* if the same had not been taken in hand."—Ibid., p. 36.

As for Leicester himself, he was always vehement upon the

To oppose this formidable array against the liberties of Europe stood Elizabeth Tudor and the Dutch Republic. For the queen, however arbitrary her nature, fitly embodied much of the nobler elements in the expanding English national character. She felt instinctively that her reliance in the impending death-grapple was upon the popular principle, the national sentiment, both in her own country and in Holland. That principle and that sentiment were symbolized in the Netherland revolt; and England, although under a somewhat despotic rule, was already fully pervaded with the instinct of self-government. The people held the purse and the sword. No tyranny could be permanently established so long as the sovereign was obliged to come every year before Parliament to ask for subsidies; so long as all the citizens and yeomen of England had weapons in their possession, and were carefully trained to use them; so long, in short, as the militia was the only army, and private adventurers or trading companies created and controlled the only navy. War, colonization, conquest, traffic, formed a joint business and a private speculation. If there were danger that England, yielding to purely mer-

subject. After his arrival in the country he was more intensely alive than ever to the dangers impending over England in case the rebel provinces should be reannexed to Spain. "He is senseless," said he, "that conceiveth not that if the King of Spain had these countries at his commandment, let her Majesty have the best peace that ever was or can be made, and we shall find, as the world new standeth, that he will force the Queen of England and England to be at his disposition. What with Spain for the west, and what with these countries for the east, England shall traffic no farther any of these ways than he shall give leave, without every voyage shall ask the charge of a whole navy to pass withal." —Bruce, *Leyc. Corresp.*, p. 82.

cantile habits of thought and action, might degenerate from the more martial standard to which she had been accustomed, there might be virtue in that Netherland enterprise which was now to call forth all her energies. The provinces would be a seminary for English soldiers.

“There can be no doubt of our driving the enemy out of the country through famine and excessive charges,” said the plain-spoken English soldier already quoted, who came out with Leicester, “if every one of us will put our minds to go forward *without making a miserable gain by the wars*. A man may see by this little progress-journey what this long peace hath wrought in us. We are weary of the war before we come where it groweth, such a danger hath this long peace brought us into. This is, and will be, in my opinion, a most fit school and nursery to nourish soldiers to be able to keep and defend our country hereafter, if men will follow it.”¹

Wilford was vehement in denouncing the mercantile tendencies of his countrymen, and returned frequently to that point in his communications with Walsingham and other statesmen. “*God hath stirred up this action*,” he repeated again, “to be a school to breed up soldiers to defend the freedom of England, which through these long times of peace and quietness is brought into a most dangerous estate, if it should be attempted. Our delicacy is such that we are already weary, yet this journey is naught in respect to the misery and hardship that soldiers must and do endure.”²

He was right in his estimate of the effect likely to be produced by the war upon the military habits of Eng-

¹ Thomas Wilford to Walsingham, December 15 (25), 1585, S. P. Office MS.

² Wilford to Burghley, December 18 (28), 1585, S. P. Office MS.

lishmen, for there can be no doubt that the organization and discipline of English troops was in anything but a satisfactory state at that period. There was certainly vast room for improvement. Nevertheless, he was wrong in his views of the leading tendencies of his age. Holland and England, self-helping, self-moving, were already inaugurating a new era in the history of the world. The spirit of commercial maritime enterprise, then expanding rapidly into large proportions, was to be matched against the religious and knightly enthusiasm which had accomplished such wonders in an age that was passing away. Spain still personified, and had ever personified, chivalry, loyalty, piety; but its chivalry, loyalty, and piety were now in a corrupted condition. The form was hollow, and the sacred spark had fled. In Holland and England intelligent enterprise had not yet degenerated into mere greed for material prosperity. The love of danger, the thirst for adventure, the thrilling sense of personal responsibility and human dignity, —not the base love for land and lucre,—were the governing sentiments which led those bold Dutch and English rovers to circumnavigate the world in cockle-shells, and to beard the most potent monarch on the earth, both at home and abroad, with a handful of volunteers.

This, then, was the contest, and this the machinery by which it was to be maintained—a struggle for national independence, liberty of conscience, freedom of the seas, against sacerdotal and world-absorbing tyranny; a mortal combat of the splendid infantry of Spain and Italy, the professional reiters of Germany, the floating castles of a world-empire, with the militiamen and mercantile marine of England and Holland united. Holland had been engaged twenty years long in the conflict.

England had thus far escaped it; but there was no doubt, and could be none, that her time had come. She must fight the battle of Protestantism on sea and shore, shoulder to shoulder with the Netherlanders, or await the conqueror's foot on her own soil.

What now was the disposition and what the means of the provinces to do their part in the contest? If the twain, as Holland wished, had become of one flesh, would England have been the loser? Was it quite sure that Elizabeth, had she even accepted the less compromising title which she refused, would not have been quite as much the protected as the "protectress"?

It is very certain that the English, on their arrival in the provinces, were singularly impressed by the opulent and stately appearance of the country and its inhabitants. Notwithstanding the tremendous war which the Hollanders had been waging against Spain for twenty years, their commerce had continued to thrive, and their resources to increase. Leicester was in a state of constant rapture at the magnificence which surrounded him from his first entrance into the country. Notwithstanding the admiration expressed by the Hollanders for the individual sumptuousness of the lieutenant-general, his followers, on their part, were startled by the general luxury of their new allies. "The realm is rich and full of men," said Wilford; "the sums men exceed in apparel would bear the brunt of this war";¹ and again: "If the excess used in sumptuous apparel were only abated, and that we could convert the same to these wars, it would stop a great gap."²

The favorable view taken by the English as to the

¹ Wilford to Walsingham, MS. before cited.

² Wilford to Burghley, MS. before cited.

resources and inclination of the Netherland commonwealth was universal. "The general wish and desire of these countrymen," wrote Sir Thomas Shirley, "is that the amity begun between England and this nation may be everlasting, and there is not any of our company of judgment but wish the same. For all they that see the goodliness and stateliness of these towns, strengthened both with fortification and natural situation, all able to defend themselves with their own abilities, must needs think it too fair a prey to be let pass, and a thing most worthy to be embraced."¹

Leicester, whose enthusiasm continued to increase as rapidly as the queen's zeal seemed to be cooling, was most anxious lest the shortcomings of his own government should work irreparable evil. "I pray you, my lord," he wrote to Burghley, "forget not us poor exiles; if you do, God must and will forget you. And great pity it were that so noble provinces and goodly havens, with such infinite ships and mariners, should not be always, as they may now easily be, at the assured devotion of England. In my opinion, he can neither love queen nor country that would not wish and further it should be so. And seeing her Majesty is thus far entered into the cause, and that these people comfort themselves in full hope of her favor, it were a sin and a shame it should not be handled accordingly, both for honor and surety."²

Sir John Conway, who accompanied the earl through the whole of his "progress-journey," was quite as much struck as he by the flourishing aspect and English pro-

¹ Sir Thomas Shirley to Earl of Leicester, December 26, 1585 (January 5, 1586), S. P. Office MS.

² Leicester to Burghley, December 27, 1585, S. P. Office MS.

clivities of the provinces. "The countries which we have passed," he said, "are fertile in their nature; the towns, cities, buildings, of more state and beauty, to such as have traveled other countries, than any they have ever seen; the people the most industrious by all means to live that be in the world, and, no doubt, passing rich. They outwardly show themselves of good heart, zeal, and loyalty toward the queen our mistress. There is no doubt that the general number of them had rather come under her Majesty's regiment than to continue under the states and burgomasters of their country. The impositions which they lay in defense of their state is wonderful. If her Highness proceed in this beginning, she may retain these parts hers, with their good love, and her great glory and gain. I would she might as perfectly see the whole country, towns, profits, and pleasures thereof, in a glass, as she may her own face; I do then assure myself she would with careful consideration receive them, and not allow of any man's reason to the contrary. . . . The country is worthy any prince in the world, the people do reverence the queen, and in love of her do so believe that the Grace of Leicester is by God and her sent among them for her good. And they believe in him for the redemption of their bodies, as they do in God for their souls. I dare pawn my soul that if her Majesty will allow him the just and rightful mean to manage this cause, that he will so handle the manner and matter as shall highly both please and profit her Majesty, and increase her country and his own honor."¹

Lord North, who held a high command in the auxil-

¹ Sir John Conway to —, December 27, 1585, S. P. Office MS.

iary force, spoke also with great enthusiasm. "Had your Lordship seen," he wrote to Burghley, "with what thankful hearts these countries receive all her Majesty's subjects, what multitudes of people they be, what stately cities and buildings they have, how notably fortified by art, how strong by nature, how fertile the whole country, and how wealthy it is, you would, I know, praise the Lord that opened your lips to undertake this enterprise, the continuance and good success whereof will eternize her Majesty, beautify her crown, with the most shipping, with the most populous and wealthy countries, that ever prince added to his kingdom, or that is or can be found in Europe. I lack wit, good my lord, to dilate this matter."¹

Leicester, better informed than some of those in his employment, entertained strong suspicions concerning Philip's intentions with regard to England, but he felt sure that the only way to laugh at a Spanish invasion was to make Holland and England as nearly one as it was possible to do.

"No doubt that the King of Spain's preparations by sea be great," he said; "but I know that all that he and his friends can make are not able to match with her Majesty's forces, if it please her to use the means that God hath given her. But besides her own, if she need, I will undertake to furnish her from hence, upon two months' warning, a navy for strong and tall ships, with their furniture and mariners, that the King of Spain, and all that he can make, shall not be able to encounter with them. I think the bruit of his preparations is made the greater to terrify her Majesty and this country

¹ Lord North to Lord Burghley, December 27, 1585, S. P. Office MS.

people. But, thanked be God, her Majesty hath little cause to fear him. *And in this country they esteem no more of his power by sea than I do of six fisher-boats off Rye.*"¹

Thus suggestive is it to peep occasionally behind the curtain. In the calm cabinet of the Escorial, Philip and his *comendador mayor* are laying their heads together, preparing the invasion of England, making arrangements for King Alexander's coronation in that island, and, like sensible, far-sighted persons as they are, even settling the succession to the throne after Alexander's death, instead of carelessly leaving such distant details to chance or subsequent consideration. On the other hand, plain Dutch sea-captains, grim beggars of the sea, and the like, denizens of a free commonwealth and of the boundless ocean,—men who are at home on blue water, and who have burned gunpowder against those prodigious slave-rowed galleys of Spain,—together with their new allies, the dauntless mariners of England, who at this very moment are "singeing the King of Spain's beard" as it had never been singed before, are not so much awe-struck with the famous preparations for invasion as was perhaps to be expected. There may be a delay, after all, before Parma can be got safely established in London and Elizabeth in Orcus, and before the Blood-Tribunal of the Inquisition can substitute its sway for that of the "most noble, wise, and learned United States." Certainly Philip the Prudent would have been startled, difficult as he was to astonish, could he have known that those rebel Hollanders of his made no more account of his slowly preparing Inviucible Armada than of six fisher-boats off Rye. Time alone could

¹ Leicester to Burghley, January 29, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

show where confidence had been best placed. Meantime it was certain that it well behooved Holland and England to hold hard together, nor let "that enterprise quail."

The famous expedition of Sir Francis Drake was the commencement of a revelation. "That is the string," said Leicester, "that touches the king indeed."¹ It was soon to be made known to the world that the ocean was not a Spanish lake, nor both the Indies the private property of Philip. "While the riches of the Indies continue," said Leicester, "he thinketh he will be able to weary out all other princes, and I know by good means that he more feareth this action of Sir Francis than he ever did anything that has been attempted against him."² With these continued assaults upon the golden treasure-houses of Spain, and by a determined effort to maintain the still more important stronghold which had been wrested from her in the Netherlands, England might still be safe. "This country is so full of ships and mariners," said Leicester, "so abundant in wealth and in the means to make money, that, had it but stood neutral, what an aid had her Majesty been deprived of! But if it had been the enemy's also, I leave it to your consideration what had been likely to ensue. These people do now honor and love her Majesty in marvelous sort."³

There was but one feeling on this most important subject among the English who went to the Netherlands. All held the same language. The question was plainly presented to England whether she would secure to herself the great bulwark of her defense, or place it in the

¹ Leicester to Burghley, January 29, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

hands of her mortal foe. How could there be doubt or supineness on such a momentous subject? "Surely, my lord," wrote Richard Cavendish to Burghley, "if you saw the wealth, the strength, the shipping and abundance of mariners, whereof these countries stand furnished, your heart would quake to think that so hateful an enemy as Spain should again be furnished with such instruments; and the Spaniards themselves do nothing doubt upon the hope of the consequence hereof, to assure themselves of the certain ruin of her Majesty and the whole estate."¹

And yet at the very outset of Leicester's administration there was a whisper of peace overtures to Spain, secretly made by Elizabeth in her own behalf and in that of the provinces. We shall have soon occasion to examine into the truth of these rumors, which, whether originating in truth or falsehood, were most pernicious in their effects. The Hollanders were determined never to return to slavery again so long as they could fire a shot in their own defense. They earnestly wished English coöperation, but it was the coöperation of English matchlocks and English cutlasses, not English protocols and apostils. It was military, not diplomatic, machinery that they required. If they could make up their minds to submit to Philip and the Inquisition again, Philip and the Holy Office were but too ready to receive the erring penitents to their embrace without a go-between.

It was war, not peace, therefore, that Holland meant by the English alliance. It was war, not peace, that Philip intended. It was war, not peace, that Elizabeth's

¹ Richard Cavendish to Lord Burghley, March 18, 1585, S. P. Office MS.

most trusty counselors knew to be inevitable. There was also, as we have shown, no doubt whatever as to the good disposition and the great power of the Republic to bear its share in the common cause. The enthusiasm of the Hollanders was excessive. "There was such a noise, both in Delft, Rotterdam, and Dort," said Leicester, "in crying 'God save the Queen!' as if she had been in Cheapside."¹ Her own subjects could not be more loyal than were the citizens and yeomen of Holland. "The members of the states dare not but be Queen Elizabeth's," continued the earl, "for, by the living God, if there should fall but the least unkindness through their default, the people would kill them. All sorts of people, from highest to lowest, assure themselves, now that they have her Majesty's good countenance, to beat all the Spaniards out of their country. Never was there people in such jollity as these be. I could be content to lose a limb, could her Majesty see these countries and towns as I have done."² He was, in truth, excessively elated, and had already, in imagination, vanquished Alexander Farnese and eclipsed the fame of William the Silent. "They will serve under me," he observed, "with a better will than ever they served under the Prince of Orange. Yet they loved him well, but they never hoped of the liberty of this country till now."³

Thus the English government had every reason to be satisfied with the aspect of its affairs in the Netherlands. But the nature of the earl's authority was indefinite. The queen had refused the sovereignty and

¹ Bruce, *Leyc. Corresp.*, pp. 30, 31, 32, December 26, 1585 (January 5, 1586).

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 61, January 14 (24), 1586.

the protectorate. She had also distinctly and peremptorily forbidden Leicester to assume any office or title that might seem at variance with such a refusal on her part. Yet it is certain that, from the very first, he had contemplated some slight disobedience to these prohibitions. "What government is requisite," wrote he in a secret memorandum of "things most necessary to understand," "to be appointed to him that shall be their governor? First, that he have as much authority as the Prince of Orange, or any other governor or captain-general, hath had heretofore."¹ Now, the Prince of Orange had been stadholder of each of the United Provinces, governor-general, commander-in-chief, Count of Holland in prospect, and sovereign, if he had so willed it. It would doubtless have been most desirable for the country, in its confused condition, had there been a person competent to wield, and willing to accept, the authority once exercised by William I. But it was also certain that this was exactly the authority which Elizabeth had forbidden Leicester to assume. Yet it is difficult to understand what position the queen intended that her favorite should maintain, nor how he was to carry out her instructions while submitting to her prohibitions. He was directed to cause the confused government of the provinces to be redressed, and a better form of polity to be established. He was ordered, in particular, to procure a radical change in the constitution, by causing the deputies to the general assembly to be empowered to decide upon important matters, without, as had always been the custom, making direct reference to the assemblies of the separate provinces. He was instructed to bring about,

¹ Bruce, Leye. Corresp., p. 20, A. D. 1585.

in some indefinite way, a complete reform in financial matters, by compelling the States-General to raise money by liberal taxation, according to the "advice of her Majesty, delivered unto them by her lieutenant."¹

And how was this radical change in the institutions of the provinces to be made by an English earl whose only authority was that of commander-in-chief over five thousand half-starved, unpaid, utterly forlorn English troops?

The Netherland envoys in England, in their parting advice, most distinctly urged him "to hale authority with the first, to declare himself chief head and governor-general" of the whole country;² for it was a political head that was wanted in order to restore unity of action, not an additional general where there were already generals in plenty. Sir John Norris, valiant, courageous, experienced,—even if not, as Walsingham observed, a "religious soldier," nor learned in anything "but a kind of licentious and corrupt government,"³—was not likely to require the assistance of the new lieutenant-general in field operations, nor could the army be brought into a state of thorough discipline and efficiency by the magic of Leicester's name. The rank and file of the English army—not the commanders—needed strengthening. The soldiers required shoes and stockings, bread and meat, and for these articles there were not the necessary funds, nor would the title of lieutenant-general supply the deficiency. The little auxiliary force was, in truth, in a condition most pitiable to be-

¹ Leicester's Instructions, in Bruce, 12-15, December, 1585.

² Advice of the Commissioners to Leicester, in Bruce, 15-19, A. D. 1585.

³ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 222, April 11 (21), 1586.

hold; it was difficult to say whether the soldiers who had been already for a considerable period in the Netherlands, or those who had been recently levied in the purlieus of London, were in the most unpromising plight. The beggarly state in which Elizabeth had been willing that her troops should go forth to the wars was a sin and a disgrace. Well might her lieutenant-general say that her "poor subjects were no better than abjects."¹ There were few effective companies remaining of the old force. "There is but a small number of the first bands left," said Sir John Conway, "and those so pitiful and unable ever to serve again as I leave to speak further of them, to avoid grief to your heart. A monstrous fault there hath been somewhere."²

Leicester took a manful and sagacious course at starting. Those who had no stomach for the fight were ordered to depart. The chaplain gave them sermons; the lieutenant-general, on St. Stephen's day, made them a "pithy and honorable" oration; and those who had the wish or the means to buy themselves out of the adventure were allowed to do so, for the earl was much disgusted with the raw material out of which he was expected to manufacture serviceable troops. Swaggering ruffians from the disreputable haunts of London, cockney apprentices, broken-down tapsters, discarded serving-men,—the Bardolphs and Pistols, Mouldys, Warts, and the like, more at home in tavern brawls or in dark lanes than on the battle-field,—were not the men to be intrusted with the honor of England at a momentous crisis. He spoke with grief and shame of the worthless character and condition of the English youths

¹ Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 23, December 5 (15), 1585.

² Sir John Conway to —, December 27, 1585, S. P. Office MS.

sent over to the Netherlands. "Believe me," said he, "you will all repent the cockney kind of bringing up at this day of young men. They be gone hence with shame enough, and too many, that I will warrant, will make as many frays with bludgeons and bucklers as any in London shall do; but such shall never have credit with me again. Our simplest men in show have been our best men, and your *gallant blood and ruffian men the worst of all others.*"¹

Much winnowed as it was, the small force might in time become more effective, and the earl spent freely of his own substance to supply the wants of his followers and to atone for the avarice of his sovereign. The picture painted, however, by Muster-master Digges of the plumed troops that had thus come forth to maintain the honor of England and the cause of liberty was anything but imposing. None knew better than Digges their squalid and slovenly condition, or was more anxious to effect a reformation therein. "A very wise, stout fellow he is," said the earl, "and very careful to serve thoroughly her Majesty."² Leicester relied much upon his efforts. "There is good hope," said the muster-master, "that his Excellency will shortly establish such good order for the government and training of our nation that these weak, bad-furnished, ill-armed, and worse-trained bands, thus rawly left unto him, shall within a few months prove as well-armed, trained, complete, gallant companies as shall be found elsewhere in Europe."³ The damage they were likely to inflict upon the enemy seemed very problematical, until they should

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 228, April 16 (26), 1586.

² Ibid., 135, February 24 (March 6), 1586.

³ Digges to Walsingham, January 2 (12), 1585, S. P. Office MS.

have been improved by some wholesome ball-praetice. "They are so unskilful," said Digges, "that if they should be earried to the field no better trained than yet they are, they would prove much more dangerous to their own leaders and companies than anyways serviceable on their enemies. The hard and miserable estate of the soldiers generally, excepting officers, hath been such as, by the confessions of the captains themselves, they have been offered by many of their soldiers thirty and forty pounds apiece to be dismissed and sent away; whereby I doubt not the flower of the pressed English bands are gone, and the remnant supplied with such paddy persons as commonly, in voluntary procurements, men are glad to accept."¹

Even after the expiration of four months the condition of the paddy persons continued most destitute. The English soldiers became mere barefoot, starving beggars in the streets, as had never been the case in the worst of times when the states were their paymasters.² The little money brought from the treasury by the earl, and the large sums which he had contributed out of his own pocket, had been spent in settling, and not fully settling, old scores. "Let me entreat you," wrote Leices-

¹ Digges to Walsingham, MS. before cited.

² "My good lord," wrote Cavendish to Burghley, "what English heart can without shame or grief hear the Flushingers reproachfully say that even in their hardest estate the soldiers of that town were always paid at every fifteen days' end, whereas, the same being now in H. Majesty's hands, her people there can get no pay in three months, so that they be almost driven either to starve or beg in the streets. These be heavy spectacles in the eyes of such as look for relief at H. Majesty's hands. My good lord, the storm of my careful and grieved mind doth carry me I know not whither," etc.—March 18, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

ter to Walsingham, "to be a mean to her Majesty, that the poor soldiers be not beaten for my sake. *There came no penny of treasure over* since my coming hither. That which then came was most part due before it came. There is much still due. They cannot get a penny, their credit is spent, *they perish for want of victuals and clothing* in great numbers. The whole are ready to mutiny. They cannot be gotten out to service, because they cannot discharge the debts they owe in the places where they are. I have let of my own more than I may spare."¹ "There was no soldier yet able to buy *himself a pair of hose*," said the earl again, "and it is too, too great shame to see how they go, and *it kills their hearts to show themselves among men*."²

There was no one to dispute the earl's claims. The Nassau family was desperately poor, and its chief, young Maurice, although he had been elected stadholder of Holland and Zealand, had every disposition, as Sir Philip upon his arrival in Flushing immediately informed his uncle, to submit to the authority of the new governor. Louisa de Coligny, widow of William the Silent, was most anxious for the English alliance, through which alone she believed that the fallen fortunes of the family could be raised. It was thus only, she thought, that the vengeance for which she thirsted upon the murderers of her father and her husband could be obtained. "We see now," she wrote to Walsingham, in a fiercer strain than would seem to comport with so gentle a nature, deeply wronged as the daughter of Coligny and the wife of Orange had been by

¹ Leicester to Burghley and Walsingham, March 15, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Bruce, 167, March 9 (19), 1586.

papists—"we see now the effects of our God's promises. He knows when it pleases him to avenge the blood of his own, and I confess that I feel most keenly the joy which is shared in by the whole Church of God. There is none that has received more wrong from these murderers than I have done, and I esteem myself happy, in the midst of my miseries, that God has permitted me to see some vengeance. These beginnings make me hope that I shall see yet more, which will be not less useful to the good, both in your country and in these isles."¹

There was no disguise as to the impoverished condition to which the Nassau family had been reduced by the self-devotion of its chief. They were obliged to ask alms of England, until "the sapling should become a tree." "Since it is the will of God," wrote the princess to Davison, "I am not ashamed to declare the necessity of our house, for it is in his cause that it has fallen. I pray you, sir, therefore to do me and these children the favor to employ your thoughts in this regard."² If there had been any strong French proclivities on their part, as had been so warmly asserted, they were likely to disappear. Villiers, who had been a confidential

¹ "Nous voyons, Monsieur, les effets des promesses de notre Dieu qui scait quand il luy plait venger le sang des siens, y faut que je confesse que je resens fort particulièrement ceste joye commune a toute l'eglise de Dieu; comme ny ayant personne qui eust receu plus d'offence de ces massacreurs, et m'estime heureuse parmi tous mes malheurs de ce que Dieu a permis que j'en aye veu la vengeance. Ces commencemens me font esperer que j'en verrai encores d'autres, qui ne seront moins utiles aux gens de bien, et en particulier en votre royaume et en ces Isles."—Princess of Orange to Sir F. Walsingham, January 1 (11), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Princess of Orange to Davison, January 7, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

friend of William the Silent and a strong favorer of France, in vain endeavored to keep alive the ancient sentiments toward that country, although he was thought to be really endeavoring to bring about a submission of the Nassaus to Spain. "This Villiers," said Leicester, "is a most vile, traitorous knave, and doth abuse a young nobleman here extremely, the Count Maurice. For all his religion, he is a more earnest persuader secretly to have him yield to a reconciliation than Sainte-Aldegonde was. He shall not tarry ten days neither in Holland nor Zealand. He is greatly hated here of all sorts, and it shall go hard but I will win the young count."¹

As for Hohenlo, whatever his opinions might once have been regarding the comparative merits of Frenchmen and Englishmen, he was now warmly in favor of England, and expressed an intention of putting an end to the Villiers influence by simply drowning Villiers. The announcement of this summary process toward the counselor was not untinged with rudeness toward the pupil. "The young count," said Leicester, "by Villiers's means, was not willing to have Flushing rendered, which the Count Hollock perceiving, told the Count Maurice, in a great rage, that if he took any course than that of the Queen of England, and swore by no beggars, he would drown his priest in the haven before his face, and turn himself and his mother-in-law out of their house there, and thereupon went with Mr. Davison to the delivery of it."² Certainly, if Hohenlo permitted himself such startling demonstrations toward the son and widow of William the Silent, it must have been after his habitual potations had been of the deepest. Nevertheless, it

¹ Bruce, 73, January 22 (February 1), 1586.

² Ibid., 74, 75, date just quoted.

was satisfactory for the new chieftain to know that the influence of so vehement a partizan was secured for England. The count's zeal deserved gratitude upon Leicester's part, and Leicester was grateful. "This man must be cherished," said the earl; "he is sound and faithful, and hath indeed all the chief holds in his hands and at his commandment. Ye shall do well to procure him a letter of thanks, taking knowledge in general of his good will to her Majesty. He is a right Almayn in manner and fashion, free of his purse and of his drink, yet do I wish him her Majesty's pensioner before any prince in Germany, for he loves her and is able to serve her, and doth desire to be known her servant. He hath been labored by his nearest kinsfolk and friends in Germany to have left the states and to have the King of Spain's pension and very great reward, but he would not. I trust her Majesty will accept of his offer to be her servant during his life, being indeed a very noble soldier."¹ The earl was indeed inclined to take so cheerful view of matters as to believe that he should even effect a reform in the noble soldier's most unpleasant characteristic. "Hollock is a wise, gallant gentleman," he said, "and very well esteemed. He hath only one fault, which is drinking, but good hope that he will amend it. Some make me believe that I shall be able to do much with him, and I mean to do my best, for I see no man that knows all these countries, and the people of all sorts, like him, and this fault overthrows all."²

Accordingly, so long as Maurice continued under the tutelage of this uproarious cavalier, who at a later day was to become his brother-in-law, he was not likely to

¹ Bruce, 74, 75, January 22 (February 1), 1586.

² Ibid., 61, January 14 (24), 1586.

interfere with Leicester's authority. The character of the young count was developing slowly. More than his father had ever done, he deserved the character of the taciturn. A quiet, keen observer of men and things, not demonstrative nor talkative, nor much given to writing, —a modest, calm, deeply reflecting student of military and mathematical science,—he was not at that moment deeply inspired by political ambition. He was perhaps more desirous of raising the fallen fortunes of his house than of securing the independence of his country. Even at that early age, however, his mind was not easy to read, and his character was somewhat of a puzzle to those who studied it. "I see him much discontented with the states," said Leicester; "he hath a sullen, deep wit. The young gentleman is yet to be won only to her Majesty, I perceive, of his own inclination. The house is marvelous poor and little regarded by the states, and if they get anything it is like to be by her Majesty, which should be altogether, and she may easily do for him to win him sure. I will undertake it."¹ Yet the earl was ever anxious about some of the influences which surrounded Maurice, for he thought him more easily guided than he wished him to be by any others but himself. "He stands upon making and marring," he said, "as he meets with good counsel."² And at another time he observed: "The young gentleman hath a solemn, sly wit; but, in troth, if any be to be doubted toward the King of Spain, it is he and his counselors, for they have been altogether, so far, French, and so far in mislike with England as they cannot almost hide it."³

¹ Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 61, 62, January 14 (24), 1586.

² *Ibid.*, 374, July 29 (August 8), 1586.

³ *Ibid.*, 74, January 22 (February 1), 1586.

And there was still another member of the house of Nassau who was already an honor to his illustrious race. Count William Louis, hardly more than a boy in years, had already served many campaigns, and had been desperately wounded in the cause for which so much of the heroic blood of his race had been shed. Of the five Nassau brethren, his father, Count John, was the sole survivor, and as devoted as ever to the cause of Netherland liberty. The other four had already laid down their lives in its defense. And William Louis was worthy to be the nephew of William and Louis, Henry and Adolphus, and the son of John. Not at all a beautiful or romantic hero in appearance, but an odd-looking little man, with a round bullet-head, close-clipped hair, a small, twinkling, sagacious eye, rugged, somewhat puffy features screwed whimsically awry, with several prominent warts dotting, without ornamenting, all that was visible of a face which was buried up to the ears in a furry thicket of yellow-brown beard, the tough young stadholder of Friesland, in his iron corselet, and halting upon his maimed leg, had come forth with other notable personages to The Hague. He wished to do honor heartily and freely to Queen Elizabeth and her representative. And Leicester was favorably impressed with his new acquaintance. "Here is another little fellow," he said, "as little as may be, but one of the gravest and wisest young men that ever I spake withal; it is the Count Guilliam of Nassau. He governs Friesland; I would every province had such another."¹

Thus, upon the great question which presented itself upon the very threshold,—the nature and extent of the authority to be exercised by Leicester,—the most influ-

¹ Bruce, 61, January 14 (24), 1586.

ential Netherlanders were in favor of a large and liberal interpretation of his powers. The envoys in England, the Nassau family, Hohenlo, the prominent members of the states, such as the shrewd, plausible Menin, the "honest and painful" Falck,¹ and the chancellor of Gelderland,—“that very great, wise old man Leoninus,”² as Leicester called him,—were all desirous that he should assume an absolute governor-generalship over the whole country. This was a grave and a delicate matter, and needed to be severely scanned, without delay. But besides the natives, there were two Englishmen, together with Ambassador Davison, who were his official advisers. Bartholomew Clerk, LL. D., and Sir Henry Killigrew had been appointed by the queen to be members of the council of the United States, according to the provisions of the August treaty. The learned Bartholomew hardly seemed equal to his responsible position among those long-headed Dutch politicians. Philip Sydney—the only blemish in whose character was an intolerable tendency to puns—observed that “Dr. Clerk was of those clerks that are not always the wisest, and so my lord too late was finding him.”³ The earl himself, who never undervalued the intellect of the Netherlanders whom he came to govern, anticipated but small assistance from the English civilian. “I find no great stuff in my little colleague,” he said, “nothing that I looked for. It is a pity you have no more of his profession, able men to serve. This man hath good

¹ Bruce, 33, December 26, 1585 (January 5, 1586).

² Leicester to Burghley, February 18, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ Gray's Sydney, p. 313. Thus: “Turner, I hope, will serve my turn well”; and again, “Mr. Paul Bus hath too many busses in his head,” and so on (*ibid.*, 313, 327).

will and a pretty scholar's wit; *but he is too little for these big fellows, as heavy as her Majesty thinks them to be. I would she had but one or two, such as the worst of half a score be here.*"¹ The other English state counselor seemed more promising. "I have one here," said the earl, "in whom I take no small comfort; that is little Hal Killigrew. I assure you, my lord, he is a notable servant, and more in him than ever I heretofore thought of him, though I always knew him to be an honest man and an able."²

But of all the men that stood by Leicester's side, the most faithful, devoted, sagacious, experienced, and sincere of his counselors, English or Flemish, was Envoy Davison. It is important to note exactly the opinion that had been formed of him by those most competent to judge, before events in which he was called on to play a prominent and responsible though secondary part had placed him in a somewhat false position.

"Mr. Davison," wrote Sydney, "is here very careful in her Majesty's cause, and in your Lordship's. He takes great pains and goes to great charges for it."³ The earl himself was always vehement in his praise. "Mr. Davison," said he at another time, "has dealt most painfully and chargeably in her Majesty's service here, and you shall find him as sufficiently able to deliver the whole state of this country as any man that ever was in it, acquainted with all sorts here that are men of dealing. Surely, my lord, you shall do a good deed that he may

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 33.

² Leicester to Burghley, February 18, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ Sydney to Leicester, November 22, 1585, Brit. Mus., Galba, c. viii. 213, MS. Same to same, February 1 (11), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

be remembered with her Majesty's gracious consideration, for his being here has been very chargeable, having kept a very good countenance and a very good table all his abode here, and of such credit with all the chief sort as I know no stranger in any place hath the like. As I am a suitor to you to be his good friend to her Majesty, so I must heartily pray you, good my lord, to procure his coming hither shortly to me again, for I know not almost how to do without him. I confess it is a wrong to the gentleman, and I protest before God, if it were for mine own particular respect, I would not require it for five thousand pounds. But your Lordship doth little think how greatly I have to do, as also how needful for her Majesty's service his being here will be. Wherefore, good my lord, if it may not offend her Majesty, be a mean for this my request, for her own service' sake wholly."¹

Such were the personages who surrounded the earl on his arrival in the Netherlands, and such their sentiments respecting the position that it was desirable for him to assume. But there was one very important fact. He had studiously concealed from Davison that the queen had peremptorily and distinctly forbidden his accepting the office of governor-general. It seemed reasonable, if he came thither at all, that he should come in that elevated capacity. The states wished it. The earl ardently longed for it. The ambassador, who knew more of Netherland politics and Netherland humors than any man did, approved of it. The interests of both England and Holland seemed to require it. No one but Leicester knew that her Majesty had forbidden it.

Accordingly, no sooner had the bell-ringing, cannon-

¹ Leicester to Burghley, December 27, 1585, S. P. Office MS.

explosions, bonfires, and charades come to an end, and the earl got fairly housed in The Hague, than the states took the affair of government seriously in hand.

On the 9th January Chancellor Leoninus and Paul Buys waited upon Davison, and requested a copy of the commission granted by the queen to the earl. The copy was refused, but the commission was read,¹ by which it appeared that he had received absolute command over her Majesty's forces in the Netherlands by land and sea, together with authority to send for all gentlemen and other personages out of England that he might think useful to him. On the 10th the states passed a resolution to offer him the governor-generalship over all the provinces. On the same day another committee waited upon his "Excellency"—as the states chose to denominate the earl, much to the subsequent wrath of the queen—and made an appointment for the whole body to wait upon him the following morning.²

Upon that day, accordingly,—New Year's day by the English reckoning, 11th January by the New Style,—the deputies of all the states at an early hour came to his lodgings, with much pomp, preceded by a herald and trumpeters. Leicester, not expecting them quite so soon, was in his dressing-room, getting ready for the solemn audience, when, somewhat to his dismay, a flourish of trumpets announced the arrival of the whole body in his principal hall of audience. Hastening his preparations as much as possible, he descended to that apartment, and was instantly saluted by a flourish of rhetoric still more formidable, for "that very great and

¹ Resolutien van de Staten-Generaal, a° 1586, Hague Archives MS., January 9 (19), 1586.

² Ibid. Compare Bor, ii. 686 seq.

wise old Leoninus" forthwith began an oration which promised to be of portentous length and serious meaning. The earl was slightly flustered, when, fortunately, some one whispered in his ear that they had come to offer him the much-coveted prize of the stadholderate-general. Thereupon he made bold to interrupt the flow of the chancellor's eloquence in its first outpourings. "As this is a very private matter," said he, "it will be better to treat of it in a more private place. I pray you, therefore, to come into my chamber, where these things may be more conveniently discussed."¹

"You hear what my lord says," cried Leoninus, turning to his companions; "we are to withdraw into his chamber."²

Accordingly, they withdrew, accompanied by the earl and by five or six select counselors, among whom were Davison and Dr. Clerk. Then the chancellor once more commenced his harangue, and went handsomely through the usual forms of compliment, first to the queen and then to her representative, concluding with an earnest request that the earl, although her Majesty had declined the sovereignty, "would take the name and place of absolute governor and general of all their forces and soldiers, with the disposition of their whole revenues and taxes."³

So soon as the oration was concluded, Leicester, who did not speak French, directed Davison to reply in that language.

The envoy accordingly, in name of the earl, expressed the deepest gratitude for this mark of the affection and confidence of the States-General toward the queen. He

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 58, January 14 (24), 1586.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

assured them that the step thus taken by them would be the cause of still more favor and affection on the part of her Majesty, who would unquestionably, from day to day, augment the succor that she was extending to the provinces in order to relieve men from their misery. For himself, the earl protested that he could never sufficiently recompense the states for the honor which had thus been conferred upon him, even if he should live one hundred lives. Although he felt himself quite unable to sustain the weight of so great an office, yet he declared that they might repose with full confidence on his integrity and good intentions. Nevertheless, as the authority thus offered to him was very arduous, and as the subject required deep deliberation, he requested that the proposition should be reduced to writing and delivered into his hands. He might then come to a conclusion thereupon most conducive to the glory of God and the welfare of the land.¹

Three days afterward, 14th January, the offer, drawn up formally in writing, was presented to Envoy Davison, according to the request of Leicester. Three days later, 17th January, his Excellency, having deliberated upon the proposition, requested a committee of conference.² The conference took place the same day, and

¹ Resol. Stat.-Gen., January 1 (11), 1586, Hague Archives MS. According to the earl's own account of his speech through the mouth of Davison, he had much more distinctly expressed his reluctance to accept the authority offered, placing his refusal, not on the ground of unfitness, but on the unexpected nature of the proposition, and upon its "being further than had passed in the contract with her Majesty." The account in the text is from the MS. journal of the sessions of the States-General, kept from day to day by the clerk of that assembly.

² *Ibid.*, January 4-7 (14-17), 1586.

there was some discussion upon matters of detail, principally relating to the matter of contributions. The earl, according to the report of the committee, manifested no repugnance to the acceptance of the office, provided these points could be satisfactorily adjusted. He seemed, on the contrary, impatient rather than reluctant, for on the day following the conference he sent his secretary Gilpin with a somewhat importunate message. "His Excellency was surprised," said the secretary, "that the states were so long in coming to a resolution on the matters suggested by him in relation to the offer of the government-general, nor could his Excellency imagine the cause of the delay."¹

For, in truth, the delay was caused by an excessive, rather than a deficient, appetite for power on the part of his Excellency. The states, while conferring what they called the "absolute" government,—by which it afterward appeared that they meant absolute in regard to time, not to function,—were very properly desirous of retaining a wholesome control over that government by means of the state council. They wished not only to establish such a council, as a check upon the authority of the new governor, but to share with him at least in the appointment of the members who were to compose the board. But the aristocratic earl was already restive under the thought of any restraint, most of all the restraint of individuals belonging to what he considered the humbler classes.

"Cousin, my lord ambassador," said he to Davison, "among your sober companions be it always remembered, I beseech you, that your cousin have no other alliance but with gentle blood. By no means consent that he

¹ Resol. Stat.-Gen., January 8 (18), 1586, MS.

be linked in faster bonds than their absolute grant may yield him a free and honorable government, to be able to do such service as shall be meet for an honest man to perform in such a calling, which of itself is very noble. But yet it is not more to be embraced, if I were to be led in alliance by such keepers as will sooner draw my nose from the right scent of the chase than to lead my feet in the true pace to pursue the game I desire to reach. Consider, I pray you, therefore, what is to be done, and how unfit it will be in respect of my poor self, and how unacceptable to her Majesty, and how advantageous to enemies that will seek holes in my coat, if I should take so great a name upon me, and so little power. They challenge acceptation already, and I challenge their absolute grant and offer to me, before they spoke of any instructions; for so it was when Leoninus first spoke to me with them all on New Year's day, as you heard, offering in his speech all manner of absolute authority. If it please them to confirm this without restraining instructions, I will willingly serve the states, or else with such advising instructions as the dowager of Hungary had."¹

This was explicit enough, and Davison, who always acted for Leicester in the negotiations with the states, could certainly have no doubt as to the desires of the earl on the subject of "absolute" authority. He did

¹ Leicester to Davison, January 11 (21), 1586, S. P. Office MS. Davison answered in the same strain, assuring the earl that he had taken the estates well to task for wishing to "prescribe instructions after their grant of an authority absolute," and informing him that they were "very sorry anything should fall out might justly distaste him."—Davison to Leicester, January 12 (22), 1586, Brit. Mus., Galba, c. viii. p. 4, MS., January 14 (24), 1586. See Bruce, 59.

accordingly what he could to bring the states to his Excellency's way of thinking, nor was he unsuccessful.

On the 22d January a committee of conference was sent by the states to Leyden, in which city Leicester was making a brief visit. They were instructed to procure his consent, if possible, to the appointment, by the states themselves, of a council consisting of members from each province. If they could not obtain this concession, they were directed to insist as earnestly as possible upon their right to present a double list of candidates, from which he was to make nominations. And if the one and the other proposition should be refused, the states were then to agree that his Excellency should freely choose and appoint a council of state, consisting of native residents from every province, for the period of one year. The committee was further authorized to arrange the commission for the governor in accordance with these points, and to draw up a set of instructions for the state council, to the satisfaction of his Excellency. The committee was also empowered to conclude the matter at once, without further reference to the states.¹

Certainly a committee thus instructed was likely to be sufficiently pliant. It had need to be in order to bend to the humor of his Excellency, which was already becoming imperious. The adulation which he had received, the triumphal marches, the Latin orations, the flowers strewn in his path, had produced their effect, and the earl was almost inclined to assume the airs of royalty. The committee waited upon him at Leyden. He affected a reluctance to accept the "absolute" government, but his coyness could not deceive such ex-

¹ Resol. Stat.-Gen., January 9-12 (19-22), 1586, MS.

perienced statesmen as the "wise old Leoninus," or Menin, Maalzoon, Floris Thin, or Aisma, who composed the deputation. It was obvious enough to them that it was not a King Log that had descended among them, but it was not a moment for complaining. The governor elect insisted, of course, that the two Englishmen, according to the treaty with her Majesty, should be members of the council. He also, at once, nominated Leoninus, Meetkerken, Brederode, Falck, and Paul Buys to the same office, thinking, no doubt, that these were five keepers—if keepers he must have—who would not draw his nose off the scent, nor prevent his reaching the game he hunted, whatever that game might be. It was reserved for the future, however, to show whether the five were like to hunt in company with him as harmoniously as he hoped. As to the other councilors, he expressed a willingness that candidates should be proposed for him, as to whose qualifications he would make up his mind at leisure.¹

This matter being satisfactorily adjusted,—and certainly, unless the game pursued by the earl was a crown royal, he ought to have been satisfied with his success,—the states received a letter from their committee at Leyden, informing them that his Excellency, after some previous protestations, had accepted the government (24th January, 1586).²

It was agreed that he should be inaugurated governor-general of the United Provinces of Gelderland and Zutphen, Flanders, Holland, Zealand, Utrecht, Friesland, and all others in confederacy with them. He was to have supreme military command by land and sea. He was to exercise supreme authority in matters civil

¹ Resol. Stat.-Gen., January 14 (24), 1586, MS.

² Ibid.

and political, according to the customs prevalent in the reign of the Emperor Charles V. All officers, political, civil, legal, were to be appointed by him out of a double or triple nomination made by the states of the provinces in which vacancies might occur. The States-General were to assemble whenever and wherever he should summon them. They were also, as were the states of each separate province, competent to meet together by their own appointment. The governor-general was to receive an oath of fidelity from the states, and himself to swear the maintenance of the ancient laws, customs, and privileges of the country.¹

The deed was done. In vain had an emissary of the French court been exerting his utmost to prevent the consummation of this close alliance. For the wretched government of Henry III., while abasing itself before Philip II., and offering the fair cities and fertile plains of France as a sacrifice to that insatiable ambition which wore the mask of religious bigotry, was most anxious that Holland and England should not escape the meshes by which it was itself enveloped. The agent at The Hague came nominally upon some mercantile affairs, but in reality, according to Leicester, "to impeach the states from binding themselves to her Majesty."² But he was informed that there was then no leisure for his affairs, "for the states would attend to the service of the Queen of England before all princes in the world." The agent did not feel complimented by the coolness of this reception; yet it was reasonable enough, certainly, that the Hollanders should remember with bitterness the

¹ Groot Plakkaatboek, iv. 81. Bor, ii. 686. Wagenaer, viii. 115-117.

² Bruce, 47, December 31, 1585 (January 10, 1586).

contumely which they had experienced the previous year in France. The emissary was, however, much disgusted. "The fellow," said Leicester, "took it in such snuff that he came proudly to the states, and offered his letters, saying: 'Now I trust you have done all your sacrifices to the Queen of England, and may yield me some leisure to read my master's letters.'" "But they so shook him up," continued the earl, "for naming her Majesty in scorn, as they took it, that they hurled him his letters, and bid him content himself"; and so on, much to the agent's discomfiture, who retired in greater "snuff" than ever.¹

So much for the French influence. And now Leicester had done exactly what the most imperious woman in the world, whose favor was the breath of his life, had expressly forbidden him to do. The step having been taken, the prize so tempting to his ambition having been snatched, and the policy which had governed the united action of the states and himself seeming so sound, what ought he to have done in order to avert the tempest which he must have foreseen? Surely a man who knew so much of woman's nature and of Elizabeth's nature as he did ought to have attempted to conciliate her affections after having so deeply wounded her pride. He knew his power. Besides the graces of his person and manner—which few women, once impressed by them, could ever forget—he possessed the most insidious and flattering eloquence, and in absence his pen was as wily as his tongue. For the earl was imbued with the very genius of courtship. None was better skilled than he in the phrases of rapturous

¹ Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 47, December 31, 1585 (January 10, 1586).

devotion which were music to the ear both of the woman and the queen, and he knew his royal mistress too well not to be aware that the language of passionate idolatry, however extravagant, had rarely fallen unheeded upon her soul. It was strange, therefore, that in this emergency he should not at once throw himself upon her compassion without any mediator. Yet, on the contrary, he committed the monstrous error of intrusting his defense to Envoy Davison, whom he determined to despatch at once with instructions to the queen, and toward whom he committed the grave offense of concealing from him her previous prohibitions. But how could the earl fail to perceive that it was the woman, not the queen, whom he should have implored for pardon; that it was Robert Dudley, not William Davison, who ought to have sued upon his knees? This whole matter of the Netherland sovereignty and the Leicester stadholderate forms a strange psychological study, which deserves and requires some minuteness of attention, for it was by the characteristics of these eminent personages that the current history was deeply stamped.

Certainly, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, the first letter conveying intelligence so likely to pique the pride of Elizabeth should have been a letter from Leicester. On the contrary, it proved to be a dull, formal epistle from the states.

And here again the assistance of the indispensable Davison was considered necessary. On the 3d February the ambassador—having announced his intention of going to England, by command of his Excellency, so soon as the earl should have been inaugurated, for the purpose of explaining all these important transactions to her Majesty—waited upon the states with the request

that they should prepare as speedily as might be their letter to the queen, with other necessary documents, to be intrusted to his care. He also suggested that the draft or minute of their proposed epistle should be submitted to him for advice, "because the humors of her Majesty were best known to him."¹

Now, the humors of her Majesty were best known to Leicester of all men in the whole world, and it is inconceivable that he should have allowed so many days and weeks to pass without taking these humors properly into account. But the earl's head was slightly turned by his sudden and unexpected success. The game that he had been pursuing had fallen into his grasp almost at the very start, and it is not astonishing that he should have been somewhat absorbed in the enjoyment of his victory.

Three days later (6th February) the minute of a letter to Elizabeth, drawn up by Menin, was submitted to the ambassador; eight days after that (14th February) Mr. Davison took leave of the states, and set forth for the Brill on his way to England; and three or four days later yet he was still in that seaport, waiting for a favorable wind.² Thus from the 11th January (N. S.), upon which day the first offer of the absolute government had been made to Leicester, nearly forty days had elapsed, during which long period the disobedient earl had not sent one line, private or official, to her Majesty on this most important subject. And when at last the queen was to receive information of her favorite's delinquency, it was not to be in his well-known handwriting and accompanied by his penitent tears and written

¹ Resol. Stat.-Gen., February 3, 1586, MS.

² Ibid., February 6-20, 1586, MS.

caresses, but to be laid before her with all the formality of parchment and sealing-wax, in the stilted diplomatic jargon of those "highly mighty, very learned, wise, and very foreseeing gentlemen, my lords the States-General." Nothing could have been managed with less adroitness.

Meantime, not heeding the storm gathering beyond the narrow seas, the new governor was enjoying the full sunshine of power. On the 4th February the ceremony of his inauguration took place, with great pomp and ceremony, at The Hague.¹

The beautiful, placid village capital of Holland wore much the same aspect at that day as now. Clean, quiet, spacious streets, shaded with rows of whispering poplars and umbrageous limes; broad, sleepy canals—those liquid highways along which glided in phantom silence the bustle and traffic and countless cares of a stirring population; quaint, toppling houses, with tower and gable; ancient brick churches, with slender spire and musical chimes; thatched cottages on the outskirts, with stork-nests on the roofs—the whole without fortification save the watery defenses which inclosed it with long-drawn lines on every side: such was the Count's Park, or 's Graven Hage, in English called The Hague.

It was embowered and almost buried out of sight by vast groves of oaks and beeches. Ancient Badahuenan forests of sanguinary Druids, the "wild wood without mercy" of Saxon savages, where, at a later period, sovereign Dirks and Florences, in long succession of centuries, had ridden abroad with lance in rest or hawk on fist, or under whose boughs, in still nearer days, the gentle Jacqueline had pondered and wept over her sor-

¹ Resol. Stat.-Gen., February 4, 1586, MS.

rows, stretched out in every direction between the city and the neighboring sea. In the heart of the place stood the ancient palace of the counts, built in the thirteenth century by William II. of Holland, King of the Romans, with massive brick walls, cylindrical turrets, pointed gable and rose-shaped windows, and with spacious courtyard, inclosed by feudal moat, drawbridge, and portcullis.

In the great banqueting-hall of the ancient palace, whose cedarn roof of magnificent timber-work, brought by crusading counts from the Holy Land, had rung with the echoes of many a gigantic revel in the days of chivalry,—an apartment one hundred and fifty feet long and forty feet high,—there had been arranged an elevated platform, with a splendid chair of state for the “absolute” governor, and with a great profusion of gilding and velvet tapestry, hangings, gilt emblems, complimentary devices, lions, unicorns, and other imposing appurtenances. Prince Maurice and all the members of his house, the States-General in full costume, and all the great functionaries, civil and military, were assembled. There was an elaborate harangue by Orator Menin, in which it was proved, by copious citations from Holy Writ and from ancient chronicle, that the Lord never forsakes his own, so that now, when the provinces were at their last gasp by the death of Orange and the loss of Antwerp, the Queen of England and the Earl of Leicester had suddenly descended, as if from heaven, to their rescue. Then the oaths of mutual fidelity were exchanged between the governor and the states, and, in conclusion, Dr. Bartholomew Clerk ventured to measure himself with the “big fellows,” by pronouncing an oration which seemed to command universal approbation.

And thus the earl was duly installed governor-general of the United States of the Netherlands.¹

But already the first mutterings of the storm were audible. A bird in the air had whispered to the queen that her favorite was inclined to disobedience. "Some flying tale hath been told me here," wrote Leicester to Walsingham, "that her Majesty should mislike my name of Excellency. But if I had delighted, or would have received titles, I refused a title higher than Excellency, as Mr. Davison, if you ask him, will tell you; and that I, my own self, refused most earnestly that, and, if I might have done it, this also."² Certainly, if the queen objected to this common form of address, which had always been bestowed upon Leicester, as he himself observed, ever since she had made him an earl,³ it might be supposed that her wrath would mount high when she should hear of him as absolute governor-general. It is also difficult to say what higher title he had refused, for certainly the records show that he had refused nothing, in the way of power and dignity, that it was possible for him to obtain.

But very soon afterward arrived authentic intelligence that the queen had been informed of the proposition made on New Year's day (O. S.), and that, although she could not imagine the possibility of his accepting, she was indignant that he had not peremptorily rejected the offer.

¹ Resol. Stat.-Gen., February 4, 1586, MS. Bor, ii. 688, 689. Wagenaer, viii. 115 seq. Holinshed, iv. 647 seq. Stow, 715 seq.

² Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 94, February 7 (17), 1586.

³ Compare Camden, iii. 399: "Being derided by those that envied him, and the title of Excellency, which, of all Englishmen, he was the first that ever used, exploded and tripped off the stage."

“As to the proposal made to you,” wrote Burghley, “by the mouth of Leoninus, her Majesty hath been informed that you had thanked them in her name, and alleged that there was no such thing in the contract, and that therefore you could not accept nor knew how to answer the same.”¹

Now, this information was obviously far from correct, although it had been furnished by the earl himself to Burghley. We have seen that Leicester had by no means rejected, but very gratefully entertained, the proposition as soon as made. Nevertheless, the queen was dissatisfied, even without suspecting that she had been directly disobeyed. “Her Majesty,” continued the lord treasurer, “is much offended with this proceeding. She allows not that you should give them thanks, but findeth it very strange that you did not plainly declare to them that they did well know how often her Majesty had refused to have any one for her take any such government there, and that she had always so answered peremptorily. Therefore there might be some suspicion conceived that, by offering on their part, and refusal on hers, some further mischief might be secretly hidden by some odd person’s device to the hurt of the cause. But in that your Lordship did not flatly say to them that yourself did know her Majesty’s mind therein, that she never meant in this sort to take the absolute government, she is offended; considering, as she saith, that none knew her determination therein better than yourself. For at your going hence she did peremptorily charge you not to accept any such title and office, and therefore her strait commandment now is that you

¹ Burghley (in his own hand) to Leicester, January 26 (February 5), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

shall not accept the same, for she will never assent thereto, nor avow you with any such title.”¹

If Elizabeth was so wrathful even while supposing that the offer had been gratefully declined, what were likely to be her emotions when she should be informed that it had been gratefully accepted? The earl already began to tremble at the probable consequences of his maladroitness. Grave was the error he had committed in getting himself made governor-general against orders; graver still, perhaps fatal, the blunder of not being swift to confess his fault, and cry for pardon, before other tongues should have time to aggravate his offense. Yet even now he shrank from addressing the queen in person, but hoped to conjure the rising storm by means of the magic wand of the lord treasurer. He implored his friend's interposition to shield him in the emergency, and begged that at least her Majesty and the lords of council would suspend their judgment until Mr. Davison should deliver those messages and explanations with which, fully freighted, he was about to set sail from the Brill.

“If my reasons seem to your wisdoms,” said he, “other than such as might well move a true and a faithful, careful man to her Majesty to do as I have done, I do desire, for my mistaking offense, to bear the burden of it, to be disavowed with all displeasure and disgrace—a matter of as great reproach and grief as ever can happen to any man.” He begged that another person might be sent as soon as possible in his place, protesting, however, by his faith in Christ, that he had done only what he was bound to do by his regard for her Majesty's service, and that when he set foot in the country he had no

¹ Burghley to Leicester, MS. before cited.

more expected to be made governor of the Netherlands than to be made King of Spain.¹ Certainly he had been paying dear for the honor, if honor it was, and he had not intended, on setting forth for the provinces, to ruin himself for the sake of an empty title. His motives—and he was honest when he so avowed them—were motives of state at least as much as of self-advancement.² “I have no cause,” he said, “to have played the fool thus far for myself: first, to have her Majesty’s displeasure, which no kingdom in the world could make me willingly deserve; next, to undo myself in my later days, to consume all that should have kept me all my life in one half-year. But I must thank God for all, and am most heartily grieved at her Majesty’s heavy displeasure. I neither desire to live, nor to see my country with it.”³

And at this bitter thought he began to sigh like furnace, and to shed the big tears of penitence.

“For if I have not done her Majesty good service at this time,” he said, “I shall never hope to do her any, but will withdraw me into some out-corner of the world, where I will languish out the rest of my few—too many—days, praying ever for her Majesty’s long and prosperous life, and with this only comfort to live an exile, that this disgrace hath happened for no other cause but for my mere regard for her Majesty’s estate.”⁴

Having painted this dismal picture of the probable termination to his career,—not in the hope of melting Burghley, but of touching the heart of Elizabeth,—he proceeded to argue the point in question with much

¹ Bruce’s Leye. Corresp., 96, 97, February 8 (18), 1586.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 98.

logic and sagacity. He had satisfied himself, on his arrival in the provinces, that if he did not take the governor-generalship some other person would, and that it certainly was for the interest of her Majesty that her devoted servant, rather than an indifferent person, should be placed in that important position. He maintained that the queen had intimated to him, in private, her willingness that he should accept the office in question, provided the proposition should come from the states, and not from her; he reasoned that the double nature of his functions—being general and counselor for her, as well as general and counselor for the provinces—made his acceptance of the authority conferred on him almost indispensable; that for him to be merely commander over five thousand English troops, when an abler soldier than himself, Sir John Norris, was at their head, was hardly worthy her Majesty's service or himself, and that in reality the queen had lost nothing by his appointment, but had gained much benefit and honor by thus having "the whole command of the provinces, of their forces by land and sea, of their towns and treasures, with knowledge of all their secrets of state."¹

Then, relapsing into a vein of tender but reproachful melancholy, he observed that, if it had been any man but himself that had done as he had done, he would have been thanked, not censured. "But such is now my wretched case," he said, "as, for my faithful, true, and loving heart to her Majesty and my country, I have utterly undone myself. For favor, I have disgrace; for reward, utter spoil and ruin. But if this taking upon me the name of governor is so evil taken as it hath deserved dishonor, discredit, disfavor, with all griefs

¹ Bruce, 100-102, February 8 (18), 1586.

that may be laid upon a man, I must receive it as deserved of God, and not of my queen, whom I have revered with all humility, and whom I have loved with all fidelity."¹

This was the true way, no doubt, to reach the heart of Elizabeth, and Leicester had always plenty of such shafts in his quiver. Unfortunately, he had delayed too long, and even now he dared not take a direct aim. He feared to write to the queen herself, thinking that his so doing, "while she had such conceits of him, would only trouble her," and he therefore continued to employ the lord treasurer and Mr. Secretary as his mediators. Thus he committed error upon error.

Meantime, as if there had not been procrastination enough, Davison was loitering at the Brill, detained by wind and weather. Two days after the letter just cited had been despatched to Walsingham, Leicester sent an impatient message to the envoy. "I am heartily sorry, with all my heart," he said, "to hear of your long stay at Brill, the wind serving so fair as it hath done these two days. I would have laid any wager that you had been in England ere this. I pray you make haste, lest our cause take too great a prejudice there ere you come, although I cannot fear it, because it is so good and honest. I pray you imagine in what care I dwell till I shall hear from you, albeit some way very resolute."²

Thus it was obvious that he had no secret despair of his cause when it should be thoroughly laid before the queen. The wonder was that he had added the offense of long silence to the sin of disobedience. Davison had sailed, however, before the receipt of the earl's letter.

¹ Bruce, 100-102, just cited.

² Leicester to Davison, February 10 (20), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

He had been furnished with careful instructions upon the subject of his mission. He was to show how eager the states had been to have Leicester for their absolute governor,—which was perfectly true,—and how anxious the earl had been to decline the proffered honor—which was certainly false, if contemporary record and the minutes of the States-General are to be believed. He was to sketch the general confusion which had descended upon the country, the quarreling of politicians, and the discontent of officers and soldiers, from out of all which chaos one of two results was sure to arise: the erection of a single chieftain, or a reconciliation of the provinces with Spain. That it would be impossible for the earl to exercise the double functions with which he was charged—of general of her Majesty's forces, and general and chief counselor of the states—if any other man than himself should be appointed governor, was obvious. It was equally plain that the provinces could only be kept at her Majesty's disposition by choosing the course which, at their own suggestion, had been adopted. The offer of the government by the states, and its acceptance by the earl, were the logical consequence of the step which the queen had already taken. It was thus only that England could retain her hold upon the country, and even upon the cautionary towns. As to a reconciliation of the provinces with Spain,—which would have been the probable result of Leicester's rejection of the proposition made by the states,—it was unnecessary to do more than allude to such a catastrophe. No one but a madman could doubt that, in such an event, the subjugation of England was almost certain.¹

¹ Remembrances for Mr. Davison, in Bruce, 80-82, February, 1586.

But before the arrival of the ambassador the queen had been thoroughly informed as to the whole extent of the earl's delinquency. Dire was the result. The wintry gales which had been lashing the North Sea, and preventing the unfortunate Davison from setting forth on his disastrous mission, were nothing to the tempest of royal wrath which had been shaking the court world to its center. The queen had been swearing most fearfully ever since she read the news which Leicester had not dared to communicate directly to herself. No one was allowed to speak a word in extenuation of the favorite's offense. Burghley, who lifted up his voice somewhat feebly to appease her wrath, was bid, with a curse, to hold his peace. So he took to his bed,—partly from prudence, partly from gout,—and thus sheltered himself for a season from the peltings of the storm. Walsingham, more manful, stood to his post, but could not gain a hearing. It was the culprit that should have spoken, and spoken in time. "Why, why did you not write yourself?" was the plaintive cry of all the earl's friends, from highest to humblest. "But write to her now," they exclaimed, "at any rate; and, above all, send her a present, a love-gift." "Lay out two or three hundred crowns in some rare thing, for a token to her Majesty," said Christopher Hatton.¹

Strange that his colleagues and his rivals should have been obliged to advise Leicester upon the proper course to pursue; that they—not himself—should have been the first to perceive that it was the enraged woman, even more than the offended sovereign, who was to be propitiated and soothed. In truth, all the woman had been aroused in Elizabeth's bosom. She was displeased

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 113, 114, February 11 (21), 1586.

that her favorite should derive power and splendor from any source but her own bounty. She was furious that his wife, whom she hated, was about to share in his honors. For the mischievous tongues of court ladies had been collecting or fabricating many unpleasant rumors. A swarm of idle but piquant stories had been buzzing about the queen's ears, and stinging her into a frenzy of jealousy. The countess, it was said, was on the point of setting forth for the Netherlands to join the earl, with a train of courtiers and ladies, coaches and side-saddles, such as were never seen before, where the two were about to establish themselves in conjugal felicity, as well as almost royal state. What a prospect for the jealous and imperious sovereign! "Coaches and side-saddles! She would show the upstarts that there was one queen, and that her name was Elizabeth, and that there was no court but hers." And so she continued to storm and swear, and threaten unutterable vengeance, till all her courtiers quaked in their shoes.¹

Thomas Dudley, however, warmly contradicted the report, declaring, of his own knowledge, that the countess had no wish to go to the provinces, nor the earl any intention of receiving her there. This information was at once conveyed to the queen, "and," said Dudley, "it

¹ "It was told her Majesty," wrote Thomas Dudley, "that my lady was prepared presently to come over to your Excellency, with such a train of ladies and gentlewomen, and such rich coaches, litters, and side-saddles, as her Majesty had none such, and that there should be such a court of ladies as should far pass her Majesty's court here. This information (though most false) did not a little stir her Majesty to extreme choler and dislike of all your doings there, saying, with great oaths, she would have no more courts under her obeisance than her own, and would revoke you from thence with all speed. This Mr. Vice-Chamberlain

did greatly pacify her stomach.”¹ His friends did what they could to maintain the governor’s cause; but Burghley, Walsingham, Hatton, and the rest of them were all “at their wits’ end,”² and were nearly distraught at the delay in Davison’s arrival. Meantime the queen’s stomach was not so much pacified but that she was determined to humiliate the earl with the least possible delay. Having waited sufficiently long for his explanations, she now appointed Sir Thomas Heneage as special commissioner to the states, without waiting any longer. Her wrath vented itself at once in the preamble to the instructions for this agent.

“Whereas,” she said, “we have been given to understand that the Earl of Leicester hath in a very contemptuous sort, contrary to our express commandment given unto him by ourself, accepted of an offer of a more absolute government made by the states unto him than was agreed on between us and their commissioners, which kind of contemptible manner of proceeding giveth the world just cause to think that there is not that reverent respect carried toward us by our subjects as in duty appertaineth; especially seeing so notorious a contempt committed by one whom we have raised up and yielded in the eye of the world, even from the beginning of our reign, as great portion of our favor as ever subject enjoyed at any prince’s hands; we therefore, holding nothing dearer than our honor, and considering that no one thing could more touch our reputation than to induce so open and public a faction

[Hatton] told me in great secret, and afterward Mr. Secretary, and last of all my lord treasurer.”—Bruce’s *Leyc. Corresp.*, 112, February 11 (21), 1586.

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

of a prince, and work a greater reproach than contempt at a subject's hands, without reparation of our honor, have found it necessary to send you unto him, as well to charge him with the said contempt, as also to execute such other things as we think meet to be done, for the justifying of ourselves to the world, as the repairing of the indignity cast upon us by his undutiful manner of proceeding toward us. . . . And for that we find ourselves also not well dealt withal by the states, in that they have pressed the said earl, without our assent or privity, to accept of a more absolute government than was agreed on between us and their commissioners, we have also thought meet that you shall charge them therewith, according to the directions hereafter ensuing. And to the end there may be no delay used in the execution of that which we think meet to be presently done, you shall charge the said states, even as they tender the continuance of our good will toward them, to proceed to the speedy execution of our request."¹

After this trumpet-like preamble it may be supposed that the blast which followed would be piercing and shrill. The instructions, in truth, consisted in wild, scornful flourishes upon one theme. The word "contempt" had occurred five times in the brief preamble. It was repeated in almost every line of the instructions.

"You shall let the earl" ("our cousin" no longer) "understand," said the queen, "how highly and justly we are offended with his acceptation of the government, which we do repute to be a very *great and strange contempt*, least looked for at our hands, being, as he is, a

¹ The queen to Sir Thomas Heneage, February 10 (20), 1586, S. P. Office MS. The rest of the document is given in Bruce, 105 seq.

creature of our own." His omission to acquaint her by letter with the causes moving him "so *contemptuously* to break" her commandment, his delay in sending Davison "to answer the said *contempt*," had much "aggravated the fault," although the queen protested herself unable to imagine any "excuse for so *manifest a contempt*." The states were to be informed that she "held it strange" that "this creature of her own" should have been pressed by them to "commit so notorious a *contempt*" against her, both on account of this very exhibition of contempt on Leicester's part, and because they thereby "showed themselves to have a very slender and weak conceit of her judgment, by pressing a minister of hers to accept that which she had refused, as though her long experience in government had not taught her to discover what was fit to do in matters of state." As the result of such a proceeding would be to disgrace her in the eyes of mankind, by inducing an opinion that her published solemn declaration on this great subject had been intended to abuse the world, he was directed—in order to remove the hard conceit justly to be taken by the world, "in consideration of *the said contempt*"—to make a public and open resignation of the government in the place where he had accepted the same.¹

Thus it had been made obvious to the unlucky "creature of her own" that the queen did not easily digest "contempt." Nevertheless, these instructions to Heneage were gentle compared with the fierce billet which she addressed directly to the earl. It was brief, too, as the posy of a ring, and thus it ran: "TO MY LORD OF LEICESTER, FROM THE QUEEN, BY SIR THOMAS HENEAGE: How contemptuously we conceive ourself to have been used

¹ The queen to Sir Thomas Heneage, just cited.

by you, you shall by this bearer understand, whom we have expressly sent unto you to charge you withal. We could never have imagined, had we not seen it fall out in experience, that a man raised up by ourself, and extraordinarily favored by us above any other subject of this land, would have, in so contemptible a sort, broken our commandment, in a cause that so greatly toucheth us in honor; whereof, although you have showed yourself to make but little account, in most undutiful a sort, you may not therefore think that we have so little care of the reparation thereof as we mind to pass so great a wrong in silence unredressed. And therefore our express pleasure and commandment is that—all delays and excuses laid apart—you do presently, upon the duty of your allegiance, obey and fulfil whatsoever the bearer hereof shall direct you to do in our name. Whereof fail not, as you will answer the contrary at your uttermost peril.”¹

Here was no billing and cooing, certainly, but a terse, biting phraseology, about which there could be no misconception.

By the same messenger the queen also sent a formal letter to the States-General, the epistle—*mutatis mutandis*—being also addressed to the state council.

In this document her Majesty expressed her great surprise that Leicester should have accepted their offer of the absolute government, “both for police and war,” when she had so expressly rejected it herself. “To tell the truth,” she observed, “you seem to have treated us with very little respect, and put a too manifest insult upon us, in presenting anew to one of our subjects the

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 110, February 10 (20), 1586, S. P. Office, February 10 and 14 (20 and 24), 1586, MS.

same proposition which we had already declined, without at least waiting for our answer whether we should like it or no, as if we had not sense enough to be able to decide upon what we ought to accept or refuse."¹ She proceeded to express her dissatisfaction with the course pursued, because so repugnant to her published declaration, in which she had stated to the world her intention of aiding the provinces, without meddling in the least with the sovereignty of the country. "The contrary would now be believed," she said, "at least by those who take the liberty of censuring, according to their pleasure, the actions of princes." Thus her honor was at stake. She signified her will, therefore, that, in order to convince the world of her sincerity, the authority conferred should be revoked, and that "the earl," whom she had decided to recall very soon,² should, during his brief residence there, only exercise the power agreed upon by the original contract. She warmly reiterated her intention, however, of observing inviolably the promise of assistance which she had given to the states. "And if," she said, "any malicious or turbulent spirits should endeavor, perchance, to persuade the people that this our refusal proceeds from lack of affection or honest disposition to assist you,—instead of being founded only on respect for our honor, which is dearer to us than life,—we beg you, by every possible means, to shut their mouths and prevent their pernicious designs."³

¹ Minute to the States-General; the like to the council of state, *mutatis mutandis*, S. P. Office MS., February 13 (23), 1586.

² "Lequel sommes deliberée de rappeler bientôt," etc.—MS. ubi sup.

³ "Vous tachez par tous moyens de cloire la bouche et empecher les pernicioeux desseins de tel dangereux instruments," etc.—Ibid.

Thus, heavily laden with the royal wrath, Heneage was on the point of leaving London for the Netherlands, on the very day upon which Davison arrived, charged with deprecatory missives from that country. After his long detention he had a short passage, crossing from the Brill to Margate in a single night. Coming immediately to London, he sent to Walsingham to inquire which way the wind was blowing at court, but received a somewhat discouraging reply. "Your long detention by his Lordship," said the secretary, "has wounded the whole cause," adding that he thought her Majesty would not speak with him. On the other hand, it seemed indispensable for him to go to the court, because if the queen should hear of his arrival before he had presented himself, she was likely to be more angry than ever.¹

So, the same afternoon, Davison waited upon Walsingham, and found him in a state of despondency. "She takes his Lordship's acceptance of the government most haynously," said Sir Francis, "and has resolved to send Sir Thomas Heneage at once, with orders for him to resign the office. She has been threatening you and Sir Philip Sydney, whom she considers the chief actors and persuaders in the matter, according to information received from some persons about my Lord of Leicester."²

Davison protested himself amazed at the secretary's discourse, and at once took great pains to show the reasons by which all parties had been influenced in the matter of the government. He declared roundly that if the queen should carry out her present intentions the

¹ Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 117, 118, February 17 (27), 1586.

² *Ibid.*

earl would be most unworthily disgraced, the cause utterly overthrown, the queen's honor perpetually stained, and that her kingdom would incur great disaster.

Directly after this brief conversation, Walsingham went up-stairs to the queen, while Davison proceeded to the apartments of Sir Christopher Hatton. Thence he was soon summoned to the royal presence, and found that he had not been misinformed as to the temper of her Majesty. The queen was indeed in a passion, and began swearing at Davison so soon as he got into the chamber, abusing Leicester for having accepted the offer of the states against her many-times-repeated commandment, and the ambassador for not having opposed his course. The thing had been done, she said, in contempt of her, as if her consent had been of no consequence, or as if the matter in no way concerned her.

So soon as she paused to take breath, the envoy modestly, but firmly, appealed to her reason, that she would at any rate lend him a patient and favorable ear, in which case he doubted not that she would form a more favorable opinion of the case than she had hitherto done. He then entered into a long discourse upon the state of the Netherlands before the arrival of Leicester, the inclination in many quarters for a peace, the "despair that any sound and good fruit would grow of her Majesty's cold beginning," the general unpopularity of the states' government, the "corruption, partiality, and confusion" which were visible everywhere, the perilous condition of the whole cause, and the absolute necessity of some immediate reform.

"It was necessary," said Davison, "that some one person of wisdom and authority should take the helm.

Among the Netherlanders none was qualified for such a charge. Lord Maurice is a child, poor, and of but little respect among them; Elector Truchses, Count Hohenlo, Meurs, and the rest, strangers and incapable of the burden. These considerations influenced the states to the step which had been taken, without which all the rest of her benevolence was to little purpose." Although the contract between the commissioners and the queen had not literally provided for such an arrangement, yet it had always been contemplated by the states, who had left themselves without a head until the arrival of the earl.

"Under one pretext or another," continued the envoy, "my Lord of Leicester had long delayed to satisfy them" (and in so stating he went somewhat further in defense of his absent friend than the facts would warrant), "for he neither flatly refused it, nor was willing to accept, until your Majesty's pleasure should be known."¹ Certainly the records show no reservation of his acceptance until the queen had been consulted, but the defense by Davison of the offending earl was so much the more courageous.

"At length, wearied by their importunity, moved with their reasons, and compelled by necessity, he thought it better to take the course he did," proceeded the diplomatist, "for otherwise he must have been an eye-witness of the dismemberment of the whole country, which could not be kept together but by a reposed hope in her Majesty's found favor, which had been utterly despaired of by his refusal. He thought it better, by accepting, to increase the honor, profit, and surety of her Majesty, and the good of the cause, than, by refusing, to utterly hazard the one and overthrow the other."²

¹ Bruce, 120, February 17 (27), 1586.

² *Ibid.*

To all this and more, well and warmly urged by Davison, the queen listened by fits and starts, often interrupting his discourse by violent abuse of Leicester, accusing him of contempt for her, charging him with thinking more of his own particular greatness than of her honor and service, and then "digressing into old griefs," said the envoy, "too long and tedious to write." She vehemently denounced Davison also for dereliction of duty in not opposing the measure; but he manfully declared that he never deemed so meanly of her Majesty or of his Lordship as to suppose that she would send him, or that he would go to the provinces, merely "to take command of the relics of Mr. Norris's worn and decayed troops." Such a charge, protested Davison, was utterly unworthy a person of the earl's quality, and utterly unsuited to the necessity of the time and state.¹

But Davison went farther in defense of Leicester. He had been present at many of the conferences with the Netherland envoys during the preceding summer in England, and he now told the queen stoutly to her face that she herself, or at any rate one of her chief counselors, in her hearing and his, had expressed her royal determination not to prevent the acceptance of whatever authority the states might choose to confer, by any one whom she might choose to send. She had declined to accept it in person, but she had been willing that it should be wielded by her deputy, and this remembrance of his had been confirmed by that of one of the commissioners since their return. She had never, Davison maintained, sent him one single line having any bearing on the subject. Under such circumstances, "I might have been accused of madness," said he, "to have

¹ Bruce, 121, February 17 (27), 1586.

dissuaded an action in my poor opinion so necessary and expedient for your Majesty's honor, surety, and greatness." If it were to do over again, he avowed, and "were his opinion demanded, he could give no other advice than that which he had given, having received no contrary commandment from her Highness."¹

And so ended the first evening's long and vehement debate, and Davison departed, "leaving her," as he said, "much qualified, though in many points unsatisfied."² She had, however, absolutely refused to receive a letter from Leicester, with which he had been charged, but which, in her opinion, had better have been written two months before.

The next day it seemed, after all, that Heneage was to be despatched, "in great heat," upon his mission. Davison accordingly requested an immediate audience. So soon as admitted to the presence he burst into tears, and implored the queen to pause before she should inflict the contemplated disgrace on one whom she had hitherto so highly esteemed, and, by so doing, dishonor herself and imperil both countries. But the queen was more furious than ever that morning, returning at every pause in the envoy's discourse to harp upon the one string: "How dared he come to such a decision without at least imparting it to me?" and so on, as so many times before. And again Davison, with all the eloquence and with every soothing art he had at command, essayed to pour oil upon the waves. Nor was he entirely unsuccessful, for presently the queen became so calm again that he ventured once more to present the rejected letter of the earl. She broke the seal, and at sight of the well-known handwriting she became still

¹ Bruce, 121, February 17 (27), 1586. ² *Ibid.*, 122, same date.

more gentle, and so soon as she had read the first of her favorite's honeyed phrases she thrust the precious document into her pocket, in order to read it afterward, as Davison observed, at her leisure.¹

The opening thus successfully made, and the envoy having thus, "by many insinuations," prepared her to lend him a "more patient and willing ear than she had vouchsafed before," he again entered into a skilful and impassioned argument to show the entire wisdom of the course pursued by the earl.²

It is unnecessary to repeat the conversation. Suffice to say that no man could have more eloquently and faithfully supported an absent friend under difficulties than Davison now defended the earl. The line of argument is already familiar to the reader, and, in truth, the queen had nothing to reply, save to insist upon the governor's delinquency in maintaining so long and inexplicable a silence. And at this thought, in spite of the envoy's eloquence, she went off again in a paroxysm of anger, abusing the earl, and deeply censuring Davison for his "peremptory and partial dealing."³

"I had conceived a better opinion of you," she said, "and I had intended more good to you than I now find you worthy of."

"I humbly thank your Highness," replied the ambassador, "but I take yourself to witness that I have never affected or sought any such grace at your hands. And

¹ Bruce, 122, February 17 (27), 1586.

² Ibid. "The beginning of our comedy was uncommon sharp," said Davison, "but this much I do be bold to assure you, that if I had not arrived as I did, both his Lordship had been utterly disowned and the cause overthrown."—Davison to Herle, February 17, 1586, Brit. Mus., Galba, c. viii. 33, MS.

³ Bruce, 123, same date.

if your Majesty persists in the dangerous course on which you are now entering, I only pray your leave, in recompense for all my travails, to retire myself home, where I may spend the rest of my life in praying for you, whom Salvation itself is not able to save, if these purposes are continued. Henceforth, Madam, he is to be deemed happiest who is least interested in the public service.”¹

And so ended the second day's debate. The next morning the lord treasurer, who, according to Davison, employed himself diligently, as did also Walsingham and Hatton,² in dissuading the queen from the violent measures which she had resolved upon, effected so much of a change as to procure the insertion of those qualifying clauses in Heneage's instructions which had been previously disallowed. The open and public disgrace of the earl, which was to have been peremptorily demanded, was now to be deferred, if such a measure seemed detrimental to the public service. Her Majesty, however, protested herself as deeply offended as ever, although she had consented to address a brief, somewhat mysterious, but benignant letter of compliment to the states.³

¹ Bruce, 124, February 17 (27), 1586.

² Ibid., 143, February 28 (March 10), 1586; but to Walsingham Leicester “owed more,” according to Davison, “for his constant friendship and sufferance for his sake than to all others at court.” —Davison to Herle, Brit. Mus., Galba, c. viii., MS.

³ “Monsieur Davison nous a bien au long discouru et représenté,” said the queen, “de quel zele vous avez été poussés a faire l'offre du gouvernement absolu de ces pays la au Comte de Leycestre, avec les plus grandes signes et demonstrations d'une vehemente et devotionnee affection envers nous, qu'on scauroit desirer, dont on nous pourroit à bon droit taxer d'ingratitude, si

Soon after this Davison retired for a few days from the court, having previously written to the earl that "the heat of her Majesty's offense to his Lordship was abating every day somewhat, and that she was disposed both to hear and to speak more temperately of him."¹

He implored him accordingly to a "more diligent entertaining of her by wise letters and messages, wherein his slackness hitherto appeared to have bred a great part of this unkindness."² He observed also that the "traffic of peace was still going on underhand; but whether to use it as a second string to our bow, if the first should fail, or of any settled inclination thereunto, he could not affirm."³

Meantime Sir Thomas Heneage was despatched on his mission to the states, despite all the arguments and expostulations of Walsingham, Burghley, Hatton, and Davison. All the queen's counselors were unequivocally in favor of sustaining Leicester, and Heneage was not a little embarrassed as to the proper method of conducting the affair. Everything, in truth, was in a most confused condition. He hardly understood to

eussions oublié de vous en remercier bien expressement, et de vous rendre certains des effects reciproques que cela cause en nous d'une entiere affection envers vous, combien que pour plusieurs grandes et importantes considerations ne puissions nous accorder a l'acceptation du dit offre. . . Nous asseurant que si scavez de quelle consequence sont les raisons et considerations *que ne nous pouvons communiquer pour plusieurs respects d'importance*, et sur les quelles notre repos est fondé, *vous memes seriez de notre avis*, et demeureriez contents du diet refus, lequel sera cause d'augmenter encores de tant plus le soin qu'avons promis d'avoir du bien et conversation de ces pays la."—Minute of H. Majesty's Letter to the States-General, S. P. Office MS., February, 1586.

¹ Bruce, 124, February 17 (27), 1586.

² Ibid., 125, same date.

³ Ibid.

what power he was accredited. "Heneage writes even now unto me," said Walsingham to Davison, "that he cannot yet receive any information who be the states, which he thinketh will be a great mainer unto him in his negotiation. I have told him that it is an assembly much like that of our burgesses that represent the state, and that my Lord of Leicester may cause some of them to meet together, unto whom he may deliver his letters and messages."¹ Thus the new envoy was to request the culprit to summon the very assembly by which his downfall and disgrace were to be solemnized, as formally as had been so recently his elevation to the height of power. The prospect was not an agreeable one, and the less so because of his general want of familiarity with the constitutional forms of the country he was about to visit. Davison accordingly, at the request of Sir Francis, furnished Heneage with much valuable information and advice upon the subject.²

¹ Walsingham to Davison, February 25, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² "The government as it is now," said he, "you shall find altered from the form whereof I delivered you some notes the last year. The general commandment rests presently in the hands of my Lord of Leicester, as governor of the countries for them, over and besides his lieutenantancy from the queen. The nature of his authority reaches to an absolute command in matters belonging to the wars, though in civil things limited to the lawful power of other governors-general in times past, as you shall better perceive by the commission and acts themselves, which I know my lord will not conceal from you. The contributions toward the war of two hundred thousand florins, or twenty thousand pounds, the month, agreed to by the four provinces of Holland, Zealand, Friesland, and Utrecht, are to be levied chiefly on the ordinary means of consumption, or things spent and consumed in the country, which in Holland alone doth now amount to ninety thousand florins monthly, besides the quota of the other provinces, and over

Thus provided with information, forewarned of danger, furnished with a double set of letters from the queen to the states,—the first expressed in language of extreme exasperation, the others couched in almost affectionate terms,—and laden with messages brimful of wrathful denunciation from her Majesty to one who was notoriously her Majesty's dearly beloved, Sir Thomas Heneage set forth on his mission. These were perilous times for the Davisons and the Heneages, when even Leicesters and Burghleys were scarcely secure.

Meantime the fair weather at court could not be depended upon from one day to another, and the clouds were perpetually returning after the rain.

and above their customs upon all merchandise going out and coming in, and, besides, all this may be levied in the other provinces of Gelderland, Overysse, Brabant, and Flanders. They are to put into my lord's hands the letting and farming of these impositions yet in force till April next, which, coming short of the general sum, they have promised to supply by a contribution extraordinary, such as tax on land and other things, whereof my lord can and will thoroughly inform you. The sovereignty, notwithstanding, remains *penes ordines*, which we call the estates. These consist of the whole provinces united, to the number ordinarily of some eighteen or twenty persons, each province deputing some four or five, as the occasion and time require. These are chosen out by their provinces, and are sent to the general assembly upon extraordinary occasions, as when there is occasion for making some new ordinance, either for contributions or other occurrences, concerning the whole generality. The place of their ordinary meeting is The Hague. The time of their continuance together is not longer than till the matter in question be resolved, or remitted to a new report, which often happeneth. These, having remained together upon my lord's coming till he had agreed to the acceptance of the government, were to depart home, about the time of my coming thence, to return within some few days after for

“Since my second and third day’s audience,” said Davison, “the storms I met with at my arrival have overblown and abated daily. On Saturday again she fell into some new heat, which lasted not long. This day I was myself at the court, and found her in reasonable good terms, though she will not yet seem satisfied to me either with the matter or manner of your proceeding, notwithstanding all the labor I have taken in that behalf. Yet I find not her Majesty altogether so sharp as some men look, though her favor has outwardly

the determining of a new proposition for the increase of their ordinary contributions, and are by this time, I think, dissolved again. In this case, your letters to them—*if you have any*—must tarry a new convocation, for to them only it appertains to answer the matter of my lord’s election, forasmuch as concerneth the country. The council of estate resident with my lord hath been chosen since his election to the government, composed of some ten or twelve persons, at the denomination of the provinces and my lord’s election. These you shall find attending upon my lord as his ordinary assistants in all matters concerning the public government, but to them it belongeth not to deliver anything touching this case of my lord’s without special direction. And thus much touching the form of that government as far forth as the time will suffer me to discourse unto you, or may belong to your present charge, leaving you for other things to be more particularly satisfied by Sir Philip Sydney, Mr. Killigrew, and others of your friends at your arrival there.”

Having given this correct and graphic outline of the government to which Heneage had thus been despatched upon such delicate and perilous business, Davison proceeded to whisper a word of timely caution in his ear.

“I cannot but let you know,” he said, “how heartily sorry I am that it is not more plausible to my lord, and profitable to that poor country. What may move her Majesty to take this course I know not; but this I protest unto you before God, that I know not what other course the estates or my lord might have taken than they have done, nor how the country may be saved if this act be

cooled in respect both of this action and of our plain proceeding with her here in defense thereof." ¹

The poor countess, whose imaginary exodus with the long procession of coaches and side-saddles had excited so much ire, found herself in a most distressing position. "I have not seen my lady these ten or twelve days," said Davison. "To-morrow I hope to do my duty toward her. I found her greatly troubled with tempestuous news she received from court, but somewhat comforted when she understood how I had proceeded with her Majesty. . . . But these passions overblown, I hope her Majesty will have a gracious regard both toward myself and the cause." ²

But the passions seemed not likely to blow over so soon as was desirable. Leicester's brother, the Earl of Warwick, took a most gloomy view of the whole transaction, and hoarser than the raven's was his boding tone.

"Well, our mistress's extreme rage doth increase rather than diminish," he wrote, "and she giveth out great threatening words against you. Therefore make the best assurance you can for yourself, and trust not

discouraged and overthrown. To advise you how to carry yourself I will not take upon me, and yet dare be bold to affirm this much, that your message, if it be not all the better handled in your wisdom, cannot but breed utter dishonor to my lord, ruin to the cause, and repentance ere long to her Majesty's self, which will better appear unto you when you shall be there to look into their estate. But seeing God hath so disposed thereof, I will cast my care upon his providence, and recommend the cause to him that governs all."—Davison to Heneage, February 26, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

¹ Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 142, February 28 (March 10), 1586.

² *Ibid.*, 144, MS. just cited.

her oath, for that her malice is great and unquenchable in the wisest of their opinions here, and as for other friendships, as far as I can learn, it is as doubtful as the other. Wherefore, my good brother, repose your whole trust in God, and he will defend you in despite of all your enemies. And let this be a great comfort to you, and so it is likewise to myself and all your assured friends, and that is, that you were never so honored and loved in your life amongst all good people as you are at this day, only for dealing so nobly and wisely in this action as you have done; so that, whatsoever cometh of it, you have done your part. I praise God from my heart for it. Once again, have great care of yourself, I mean for your safety, and if she will needs revoke you, to the overthrowing of the cause, if I were as you, if I could not be assured *there, I would go to the farthest part of Christendom rather than ever come into England again. Take heed whom you trust, for that you have some false boys about you.*"¹

And the false boys were busy enough, and seemed likely to triumph in the result of their schemes. For a glance into the secret correspondence of Mary of Scotland has already revealed the earl to us constantly surrounded by men in masks. Many of those nearest his person, and of highest credit out of England, were his deadly foes, sworn to compass his dishonor, his confusion, and eventually his death, and in correspondence with his most powerful adversaries at home and abroad. Certainly his path was slippery and perilous along those icy summits of power, and he had need to look well to his footsteps.

Before Heneage had arrived in the Netherlands, Sir

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 150, 151, March 6 (16), 1586.

Thomas Shirley, despatched by Leicester to England with a commission to procure supplies for the famishing soldiers, and, if possible, to mitigate the queen's wrath, had been admitted more than once to her Majesty's presence. He had fought the earl's battle as manfully as Davison had done, and, like that envoy, had received nothing in exchange for his plausible arguments but bitter words and big oaths. Eight days after his arrival he was introduced by Hatton into the privy chamber, and at the moment of his entrance was received with a volley of execrations.¹

"I did expressly and peremptorily forbid his acceptance of the absolute government, in the hearing of divers of my council," said the queen.

SHIRLEY: "The necessity of the case was imminent, your Highness. It was his Lordship's intent to do all for your Majesty's service. Those countries did expect him as a governor at his first landing, and the states durst do no other than satisfy the people also with that opinion. The people's mislike of their present government is such and so great as that the name of states is grown odious amongst them. Therefore the states, doubting the furious rage of the people, conferred the authority upon his Lordship, with incessant suit to him to receive it. Notwithstanding this, however, he did deny it until he saw plainly both confusion and ruin of that country if he should refuse. On the other hand, when he had seen into their estates, his Lordship found great profit and commodity like to come unto your Majesty by your acceptance of it. Your Highness may now have garrisons of English in as many towns as pleaseth you, without any more charge than you are now at

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 172, March 14 (24), 1586.

Nor can any peace be made with Spain at any time hereafter, but through you and by you. Your Majesty should remember, likewise, that if a man of another nation had been chosen governor it might have wrought great danger. Moreover, it would have been an indignity that your lieutenant-general should of necessity be under him that so should have been elected. Finally, this is a stop to any other that may affect the place of government there."

QUEEN (who has manifested many signs of impatience during this discourse): "Your speech is all in vain. His Lordship's proceeding is sufficient to make me infamous to all princes, having protested the contrary, as I have done, in a book which is translated into divers and sundry languages. His Lordship, being my servant, a creature of my own, ought not, in duty toward me, have entered into this course without my knowledge and good allowance."

SHIRLEY: "But the world hath conceived a high judgment of your Majesty's great wisdom and providence, shown by your assailing the King of Spain at one time both in the Low Countries and also by Sir Francis Drake. I do assure myself that the same judgment which did first cause you to take this in hand must continue a certain knowledge in your Majesty that one of these actions must needs stand much better by the other. If Sir Francis do prosper, then all is well. And though he should not prosper, yet this hold that his Lordship hath taken for you on the Low Countries must always assure an honorable peace at your Highness's pleasure. I beseech your Majesty to remember that to the King of Spain the government of his Lordship is no greater matter than if he were but your lieu-

tenant-general there; but the voyage of Sir Francis is of much greater offense than all."

QUEEN (interrupting): "I can very well answer for Sir Francis. Moreover, if need be, the gentleman careth not if I should disavow him."

SHIRLEY: "Even so standeth my lord, if your disavowing of him may also stand with your Highness's favor toward him. Nevertheless, should this bruit of your mislike of his Lordship's authority there come unto the ears of those people,—being a nation both sudden and suspicious, and having been heretofore used to stratagem,—I fear it may work some strange notion in them, considering that, at this time, there is an increase of taxation raised upon them, the bestowing whereof perchance they know not of. His Lordship's giving up of the government may leave them altogether without government, and in worse case than they were ever in before. For *now the authority of the states is dissolved, and his Lordship's government is the only thing that holdeth them together.* I do beseech your Highness, then, to consider well of it, and if there be any private cause for which you take grief against his Lordship, nevertheless to have regard unto the public cause, and to have a care of your own safety, which, in many wise men's opinions, standeth much upon the good maintenance and upholding of this matter."

QUEEN: "I believe nothing of what you say concerning the dissolving of the authority of the states. I know well enough that the states do remain states still. I mean not to do harm to the cause, but only to reform that which his Lordship hath done beyond his warrant from me."¹

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 171-176, March 14 (24), 1586.

And with this the queen swept suddenly from the apartment. Sir Thomas, at different stages of the conversation, had in vain besought her to accept a letter from the earl which had been intrusted to his care. She obstinately refused to touch it. Shirley had even had recourse to stratagem, affecting ignorance on many points concerning which the queen desired information, and suggesting that doubtless she would find those matters fully explained in his Lordship's letter.¹ The artifice was in vain, and the discussion was, on the whole, unsatisfactory. Yet there is no doubt that the queen had had the worst of the argument, and she was far too sagacious a politician not to feel the weight of that which had been urged so often in defense of the course pursued. But it was with her partly a matter of temper and offended pride, perhaps even of wounded affection.

On the following morning Shirley saw the queen walking in the garden of the palace, and made bold to accost her. Thinking, as he said, "to test her affection to Lord Leicester by another means," the artful Sir Thomas stepped up to her, and observed that his Lordship was seriously ill. "It is feared," he said, "that the earl is again attacked by the disease of which Dr. Goodrowse did once cure him. Wherefore his Lordship is now a humble suitor to your Highness that it would please you to spare Goodrowse, and give him leave to go thither for some time."

The queen was instantly touched.

"Certainly—with all my heart, with all my heart, he shall have him," she replied, "and sorry I am that his Lordship hath that need of him."

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 171-176, March 14 (24), 1586.

"And indeed," returned sly Sir Thomas, "your Highness is a very gracious prince, who are pleased not to suffer his Lordship to perish in health, though otherwise you remain deeply offended with him."

"You know my mind," returned Elizabeth, now all the queen again, and perhaps suspecting the trick; "I may not endure that any man should alter my commission and the authority that I gave him, upon his own fancies and without me."

With this she instantly summoned one of her gentlemen in order to break off the interview, fearing that Shirley was about to enter again upon a discussion of the whole subject, and again to attempt the delivery of the earl's letter.¹

In all this there was much of superannuated coquetry, no doubt, and much of Tudor despotism, but there was also a strong infusion of artifice. For it will soon be necessary to direct attention to certain secret transactions of an important nature in which the queen was engaged, and which were even hidden from the all-seeing eye of Walsingham, although shrewdly suspected both by that statesman and by Leicester, but which were most influential in modifying her policy at that moment toward the Netherlands.

There could be no doubt, however, of the stanch and strenuous manner in which the delinquent earl was supported by his confidential messengers and by some of his fellow-councilors. His true friends were urgent that the great cause in which he was engaged should be forwarded sincerely and without delay. Shirley had been sent for money; but to draw money from Elizabeth was like coining her life-blood, drachma by drachma.

¹ Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 175, 176, March 14 (24), 1586.

"Your Lordship is like to have but a poor supply of money at this time," said Sir Thomas. "To be plain with you, I fear she groweth weary of the charge, and will hardly be brought to deal thoroughly in the action."

He was also more explicit than he might have been, had he been better informed as to the disposition of the chief personages of the court, concerning whose temper the absent earl was naturally anxious. Hatton was most in favor at the moment, and it was through Hatton that the communications upon Netherland matters passed; "for," said Shirley, "she will hardly endure Mr. Secretary [Walsingham] to speak unto her therein."

"And truly, my lord," he continued, "as Mr. Secretary is a noble, good, and true friend unto you, so doth Mr. Vice-Chamberlain show himself an honorable, true, and faithful gentleman, and doth carefully and most like a good friend for your Lordship."

And thus very succinctly and graphically had the envoy painted the situation to his principal. "Your Lordship now sees things just as they stand," he moralized. "Your Lordship is exceeding wise. *You know the queen and her nature best of any man.* You know all men here. Your Lordship can judge the sequel by this that you see; only this I must tell your Lordship, I perceive that fears and doubts from thence are like to work better effects here than comforts and assurance. I think it my part to send your Lordship this as it is, rather than to be silent."¹

And with these rather ominous insinuations the envoy concluded for the time his narrative.

While these storms were blowing and "overblowing" in England, Leicester remained greatly embarrassed and

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., just cited.

anxious in Holland. He had sown the wind more extensively than he had dreamed of when accepting the government, and he was now awaiting, with much trepidation, the usual harvest. And we have seen that it was rapidly ripening. Meantime the good which he had really effected in the provinces by the course he had taken was likely to be neutralized by the sinister rumors as to his impending disgrace, while the enemy was proportionally encouraged. "I understand credibly," he said, "that the Prince of Parma feels himself in great jollity that her Majesty doth rather mislike than allow of our doings here, which if it be true, let her be sure her own sweet self shall first smart."¹

Moreover, the English troops were, as we have seen, mere shoeless, shivering, starving vagabonds. The earl had generously advanced very large sums of money from his own pocket to relieve their necessity. The states, on the other hand, had voluntarily increased the monthly contribution of two hundred thousand florins, to which their contract with Elizabeth obliged them,²

¹ Bruce, 148, March 3'(13), 1586.

² "They have, I say, added," wrote Lord North to Lord Burghley, "to their first offer as much more, which amounteth to at least forty thousand pounds a month."—February 28, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

But he seems to have much overstated the amount. The regular contribution of the states was twenty thousand pounds (or two hundred thousand florins, as it was then always reckoned) a month, and they had recently granted, at Leicester's urgent request, an additional sum of forty thousand pounds (four hundred thousand florins) for four months, making thirty thousand pounds a month. It is, however, quite impossible to ascertain at this day the exact sums voted or collected in the Republic for war expenses, although there is no doubt that their efforts were enormous. Compare Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 135, February 24 (March 6), 1586.

and were more disposed than ever they had been since the death of Orange to proceed vigorously and harmoniously against the common enemy of Christendom. Under such circumstances it may well be imagined that there was cause on Leicester's part for deep mortification at the tragical turn which the queen's temper seemed to be taking.

"I know not," he said, "how her Majesty doth mean to dispose of me. It hath grieved me more than I can express that for faithful and good service she should so deeply conceive against me. God knows with what mind I have served her Highness, and perhaps some others might have failed. Yet she is neither tied one jot by covenant or promise by me in any way, nor at one groat the more charges, but myself two or three thousand pounds sterling more than now is like to be well spent. I will desire no partial speech in my favor. If my doings be ill for her Majesty and the realm, let me feel the smart of it. The cause is now well forward; let not her Majesty suffer it to quail. If you will have it proceed to good effect, send away Sir William Pelham with all the haste you can. I mean not to complain, but with so weighty a cause as this is, few men have been so weakly assisted. Her Majesty hath far better choice for my place, and with any that may succeed me let Sir William Pelham be first that may come. I speak from my soul for her Majesty's service. I am for myself upon an hour's warning to obey her good pleasure."¹

Thus far the earl had maintained his dignity. He had yielded to the solicitations of the states, and had thereby exceeded his commission and gratified his ambition, but he had in no wise forfeited his self-respect.

¹ Leicester to Burghley, February 18, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

But, so soon as the first unquestionable intelligence of the passion to which the queen had given way at his misdoings reached him, he began to whimper. The straightforward tone which Davison had adopted in his interviews with Elizabeth, and the firmness with which he had defended the cause of his absent friend at a moment when he had plunged himself into disgrace, were worthy of applause. He deserved at least a word of honest thanks.

Ignoble, however, was the demeanor of the earl toward the man, for whom he had but recently been unable to invent eulogies sufficiently warm, so soon as he conceived the possibility of sacrificing his friend as the scapegoat for his own fault. An honest school-boy would have scorned to leave thus in the lurch a comrade who had been fighting his battles so honestly.

"How earnest I was," he wrote to the lords of the council, 9th March, 1586, "not only to acquaint her Majesty, but immediately upon the first motion made by the states to send Mr. Davison over to her with letters, I doubt not but he will truly affirm for me; yea, and how far against my will it was, notwithstanding any reasons delivered me, that he and others persisted in, to have me accept first of this place. . . . The extremity of the case, and my being persuaded that Mr. Davison might have better satisfied her Majesty *than I perceive he can*, caused me—neither arrogantly nor contemptuously, but even merely and faithfully—to do her Majesty the best service."¹

He acknowledged, certainly, that Davison had been influenced by honest motives, although his importunities had been the real cause of the earl's neglect of his own

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 162, March 9 (19), 1586.

obligations. But he protested that he had himself only erred through an excessive pliancy to the will of others. "My yielding was my own fault," he admitted, "whatsoever his persuasions; but far from a contemptuous heart, or else God pluck out both heart and bowels with utter shame."¹

So soon as Sir Thomas Heneage had presented himself and revealed the full extent of the queen's wrath, the earl's disposition to cast the whole crime on the shoulders of Davison became quite undisguised.

"I thank you for your letters," wrote Leicester to Walsingham, "though you can send me no comfort. Her Majesty doth deal hardly to believe so ill of me. It is true I faulted, . . . but she doth not consider what commodities she hath withal, and herself no way engaged for it, as Mr. Davison might have better declared it, if it had pleased him. And I must thank him only for my blame, and so he will confess to you, for, I protest before God, no necessity here could have made me leave her Majesty unacquainted with the cause before I would have accepted of it, *but only his so earnest pressing me with his faithful assured promise to discharge me, however her Majesty should take it.* For you all see there she had no other cause to be offended but this, and, *by the Lord*, he was the only cause, albeit it is no sufficient allegation, being as I am. . . . He had, I think, saved all to have told her, as he promised me. *But now it is laid upon me*, God send the cause to take no harm, my grief must be the less. . . . How far Mr. Heneage's commission shall deface me I know not. He is wary to observe his commission, and I consent withal. I know the time will be her Majesty will

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 163, March 9 (19), 1586.

be sorry for it. In the meantime I am too, too weary of the high dignity. I would that any that could serve her Majesty were placed in it, and I to sit down with all my losses."¹

In more manful strain he then alluded to the sufferings of his army. "Whatsoever become of me," he said, "give me leave to speak for the poor soldiers. If they be not better maintained, being in this strange country, there will be neither good service done, nor be without great dishonor to her Majesty. . . . Well, you see the wants, and it is one cause that will glad me to be rid of this heavy high calling, and wish *me at my poor cottage again*, if any I shall find. But let her Majesty pay them well, and appoint such a man as Sir William Pelham to govern them, and she never want more honor than these men here will do, I am persuaded."²

That the earl was warmly urged by all most conversant with Netherland politics to assume the government was a fact admitted by all. That he manifested rather eagerness than reluctance on the subject, and that his only hesitation arose from the proposed restraints upon the power, not from scruples about accepting the power, are facts upon record. There is nothing save his own assertion to show any backwardness on his part to snatch the coveted prize, and that assertion was flatly denied by Davison, and was indeed refuted by every circumstance in the case. It is certain that he had concealed from Davison the previous prohibitions of the queen. He could anticipate much better than could Davison, therefore, the probable indignation of the queen. It is strange, then, that he should have shut

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 165-167, March 9 (19), 1586.

² Ibid.

his eyes to it so wilfully, and stranger still that he should have relied on the envoy's eloquence instead of his own to mitigate that emotion. Had he placed his defense simply upon its true basis, the necessity of the case, and the impossibility of carrying out the queen's intentions in any other way, it would be difficult to censure him; but that he should seek to screen himself by laying the whole blame on a subordinate was enough to make any honest man who heard him hang his head. "I meant not to do it, but Davison told me to do it, please your Majesty, and if there was naughtiness in it, he said he would make it all right with your Majesty." Such, reduced to its simplest expression, was the defense of the magnificent Earl of Leicester.

And as he had gone cringing and whining to his royal mistress, so it was natural that he should be brutal and blustering to his friend.

"By your means," said he,¹ "I have fallen into her Majesty's deep displeasure. . . . If you had delivered to her the truth of my dealing, her Highness never could have conceived as I perceive she doth. . . . Nor doth her Majesty know *how hardly*² I was drawn to accept this place before I had acquainted her, as to which you promised you would not only give her full satisfaction, but would procure me great thanks. . . . You did chiefly persuade me to take this charge upon me. . . . You can remember how many treaties you and others had with the states before I agreed, for all *yours and*

¹ Leicester to Davison, with his comments in reply written in the margin. Bruce, 168-171, March 10 (20), 1586.

² The words italicized in the text were underscored by Davison, with the marginal comment: "Let Sir Philip Sydney and others witness."

*their persuasion, to take it.*¹ . . . You gave me assurance to satisfy her Majesty, but I see not that you have done anything. . . . I did not hide from you the doubt I had of her Majesty's ill taking it. . . . *You chiefly brought me into it,*² . . . and it could no way have been heavy to you, though you had told the uttermost of your own doing, as you faithfully promised you would. . . . *I did very unwillingly come into the matter,*³ doubting that to fall out which is come to pass, . . . and it doth so *fall out by your negligent carelessness, whereof I many hundred times told you that you would*⁴ both mar the goodness of the matter, and breed me her Majesty's displeasure. . . . Thus fare you well, and except your embassages have better success, I shall have no cause to commend them."

And so was the unfortunate Davison ground into finest dust between the upper and lower millstones of royal wrath and loyal subserviency.

Meantime the other special envoy had made his appearance in the Netherlands, the other go-between between the incensed queen and the backsliding favorite. It has already been made sufficiently obvious, by the sketch given of his instructions, that his mission was a delicate one. In obedience to those instructions, Heneage accordingly made his appearance before the council, and,

¹ "All this while there was no note of any contrary commandment."—Comment of Davison.

² "Absolutely denied."—Comment of Davison.

³ "Hereof let the world judge."—Davison.

⁴ Words underscored by Davison, with the comment: "You might doubt it, but if you had uttered so much you should have employed some other in the journey, which I had no reason to affect much, preseeing well enough how thankless it would be."—Bruce, 170.

in Leicester's presence, delivered to them the severe and biting reprimand which Elizabeth had chosen to inflict upon the states and upon the governor. The envoy performed his ungracious task as daintily as he could, and after preliminary consultation with Leicester; but the proud earl was deeply mortified. "The fourteenth day of this month of March," said he, "Sir Thomas Heneage delivered a very sharp letter from her Majesty to the council of estate, besides his message, myself being present, for so was her Majesty's pleasure, as he said, and I do think he did but as he was commanded. How great a grief it must be to an honest heart and a true, faithful servant, before his own face, to a company of very wise and grave counselors, who had conceived a marvelous opinion before of my credit with her Majesty, to be charged now with a manifest and wilful contempt! Matter enough to have broken any man's heart that looked rather for thanks, as God doth know I did when I first heard of Mr. Heneage's arrival. I must say to your Lordship, for discharge of my duty, I can be no fit man to serve here,—my disgrace is too great,—protesting to you that since that day I cannot find it in my heart to come into that place, where, by my own sufferings torn, I was made to be thought so lewd a person."¹

He then comforted himself, as he had a right to do, with the reflection that this disgrace inflicted was more than he deserved, and that such would be the opinion of those by whom he was surrounded.

"Albeit one thing," he said, "did greatly comfort me, that they all best knew the wrong was great I had, and that her Majesty was very wrongfully informed of the

¹ Leicester to Burghley, March 17, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

state of my cause. I doubt not but they can and will discharge me, howsoever they shall satisfy her Majesty. And as I would rather wish for death than justly to deserve her displeasure, so, good my lord, this disgrace not coming for any ill service to her, pray procure me a speedy resolution, that I may go hide me and pray for her. My heart is broken, though thus far I can quiet myself, that I know I have done her Majesty as faithful and good service in these countries as ever she had done her since she was Queen of England. . . . Under correction, my good lord, I have had Halifax law—to be condemned first and inquired upon after. I pray God that no man find this measure that I have done, and deserved no worse.”¹

He defended himself, as Davison had already defended him, upon the necessities of the case.

“I, a poor gentleman,” he said, “who have wholly depended upon herself alone, and now, being commanded to a service of the greatest importance that ever her Majesty employed any servant in, and finding the occasion so serving me, and the necessity of time such as would not permit such delays, flatly seeing that if that opportunity were lost the like again for her service and the good of the realm was never to be looked for, presuming upon the favor of my prince, as many servants have done, exceeding somewhat thereupon, rather than breaking any part of my commission, taking upon me a place whereby I found these whole countries could be held at her best devotion, without binding her Majesty to any such matter as she had forbidden to the states before—finding, I say, both the time and opportunity to serve, and no lack but to trust to her gracious accep-

¹ Leicester to Burghley, March 17, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

tation, I now feel that how good, how honorable, how profitable soever it be, it is turned to a worse part than if I had broken all her commissions and commandments, to the greatest harm and dishonor and danger that may be imagined against her person, state, and dignity.”¹

He protested, not without a show of reason, that he was like to be worse punished “for well-doing than any man that had committed a most heinous or traitorous offense,” and he maintained that if he had not accepted the government, as he had done, “the whole state had been gone and wholly lost.”² All this, as we have seen, had already been stoutly urged by Davison, in the very face of the tempest, but with no result except to gain the enmity of both parties to the quarrel. The ungrateful Leicester now expressed confidence that the second go-between would be more adroit than the first had proved. “The causes why,” said he, “Mr. Davison could have told,—no man better,—but Mr. Heneage can now tell, who hath sought to the uttermost the bottom of all things. I will stand to his report, whether glory or vain desire of title caused me to step one foot forward in the matter. My place was great enough and high enough before, with much less trouble than by this, besides the great indignation of her Majesty. . . . If I had over-slipped the good occasion then in danger, I had been worthy to be hanged, and to be taken for a most lewd servant to her Majesty, and a dishonest wretch to my country.”³

But diligently as Heneage had sought to the bottom of all things, he had not gained the approbation of Sydney. Sir Philip thought that the new man had only

¹ Leicester to Burghley, March 17, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

ill-botched a piece of work that had been most awkwardly contrived from the beginning. "Sir Thomas Heneage," said he, "hath with as much honesty, in my opinion, done as much hurt as any man this twelvemonth hath done with naughtiness. But I hope in God, when her Majesty finds the truth of things, her graciousness will not utterly overthrow a cause so behooveful and costly unto her."¹

He briefly warned the government that most disastrous effects were likely to ensue if the earl should be publicly disgraced and the recent action of the states reversed. The penny-wise economy, too, of the queen was rapidly proving a most ruinous extravagance. "I only cry for Flushing," said Sydney, "but, unless the moneys be sent over, there will some terrible accident follow, particularly to the cautionary towns, if her Majesty mean to have them cautions."²

The effect produced by the first explosion of the queen's wrath was indeed one of universal suspicion and distrust. The greatest care had been taken, however, that the affair should be delicately handled, for Heneage, while doing as much hurt by honesty as others by naughtiness, had modified his course as much as he dared, in deference to the opinion of the earl himself, and that of his English counselors. The great culprit himself, assisted by his two lawyers, Clerk and Killigrew, had himself drawn the bill of his own indictment. The letters of the queen to the states, to the council, and to the earl himself were, of necessity, delivered, but the reprimand which Heneage had been instructed to fulminate was made as harmless as possible. It was ar-

¹ Sir P. Sydney to Burghley, March 18, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Ibid.

ranged that he should make a speech before the council, but abstain from a protocol. The oration was duly pronounced, and it was, of necessity, stinging. Otherwise the disobedience to the queen would have been flagrant. But the pain inflicted was to disappear with the first castigation. The humiliation was to be public and solemn, but it was not to be placed on perpetual record.

"We thought best," said Leicester, Heneage, Clerk, and Killigrew, "according to her Majesty's secret instructions, to take that course which might least endanger the weak estate of the provinces; that is to say, to utter so much in words as we hoped might satisfy her excellent Majesty's expectation, and yet leave them nothing in writing to confirm that which was secretly spread in many places to the hindrance of the good course of settling these affairs. Which speech, after Sir Thomas Heneage had devised, and we both perused and allowed, he, by our consent and advice, pronounced to the council of state. This we did think needful, especially because every one of the council that was present at the reading of her Majesty's first letters was of the full mind that if her Majesty should again show the least mislike of the present government, or should not by her next letters confirm it, they were all undone, for *that every man would cast with himself which way to make his peace.*"¹

Thus adroitly had the "poor gentleman, who could not find it in his heart to come again into the place, where, by his own sufferings torn, he was made to ap-

¹ "The resolution of my lord, etc., for the speech I should use to the council of the states upon the letters written from H. Majesty in March, 14th March, 1586." Signed by Leicester, Heneage, Clerk, and Killigrew. S. P. Office MS.

pear so lewd a person," provided that there should remain no trace of that lewdness and of his sovereign's displeasure upon the record of the states.¹ It was not long, too, before the earl was enabled to surmount his mortification; but the end was not yet.

The universal suspicion consequent on these proceedings grew most painful. It pointed to one invariable quarter. It was believed by all that the queen was privately treating for peace, and that the transaction was kept a secret not only from the states, but from

¹ In the foreign correspondence, or "despatch-books," between the States-General and England, there are no letters either from Queen Elizabeth or from Ortel, who was in England during the whole of the year 1586 as agent of Holland and Zealand, and at the close of the year was added to the number of commissioners sent by the States-General to the queen. Nor are there any letters addressed to Elizabeth or to Ortel, although there are a few notes (which I have used) made by the persons to whom was intrusted the task of drawing up letters to be sent by Davison in the middle of February, 1586, and afterward. There are, indeed, no letters of 1586 relative to England or to the Leicester government to be found in the archives of The Hague; nor is there in the daily register of the sessions of the States-General for 1586—which I have examined, page by page, very carefully—a trace of the dissatisfaction of the queen, or of the angry correspondence which ensued after the acceptance by Leicester of the "absolute" government. All the pieces have been lost,—probably secreted at the period,—so that no one could tell at present by consulting the Hague Archives only that there had been a quarrel. Bor, Meteren, and other contemporaries give an account of the transaction, in the main correct, although most of them are of opinion that the queen's anger was mere pretense, and that she was desirous of assuming the sovereignty in case the provinces were deemed by Leicester capable of maintaining their own cause. This view, as we have seen, was quite erroneous.

It is remarkable that between February 23 and April 11, 1586, the States-General were not in session.

her own most trusted counselors also. It would be difficult to exaggerate the pernicious effects of this suspicion. Whether it was a well-grounded one or not will be shown in a subsequent chapter, but there is no doubt that the vigor of the enterprise was thus sapped at a most critical moment. The provinces had never been more heartily banded together since the fatal 10th of July, 1584, than they were in the early spring of 1586. They were rapidly organizing their own army, and if the queen had manifested more sympathy with her own starving troops,¹ the united Englishmen and Hollanders would have been invincible even by Alexander Farnese.

Moreover, they had sent out nine war-vessels to cruise off the Cape Verde Islands for the homeward-bound Spanish treasure-fleet from America, with orders, if they missed it, to proceed to the West Indies; so that, said Leicester, "the King of Spain will have enough to do between these men and Drake."² All parties had united in conferring a generous amount of power upon the earl, who was, in truth, stadholder-general, under grant from the states, and both Leicester and the prov-

¹ "I will not trouble your Lordship," wrote Leicester to Burghley on the 15th March, 1586, "with anything that may privately concern myself. I see what the acceptation of my services is, and how little it availeth to allege most just reasons in defense of them. But though I see I am, and must be, disgraced, which God, I hope, will give me strength to bear patiently, yet let me entreat your L^p to be a mean to her M. that the poor soldiers be not beaten for my sake. There came no penny of treasure over since my coming hither. That which then came was most part due before it came. There is much due to them. They cannot get a penny. Their credit is spent. They *perish for want of victual and clothing in great numbers*. The whole and some are ready to mutiny," etc.—S. P. Office MS.

² Leicester to Burghley, March 17, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

inces themselves were eager and earnest for the war. In war alone lay the salvation of England and Holland. Peace was an impossibility. It seemed to the most experienced statesmen of both countries even an absurdity. It may well be imagined, therefore, that the idea of an underhand negotiation by Elizabeth would cause a frenzy in the Netherlands. In Leicester's opinion, nothing short of a general massacre of the English would be the probable consequence. "No doubt," said he, "the very way it is to put us all to the sword here. For mine own part, it would be happiest for me, though I wish and trust to lose my life in better sort."¹

Champagny, however, was giving out mysterious hints that the King of Spain could have peace with England when he wished for it. Sir Thomas Cecil, son of Lord Burghley, on whose countenance the states especially relied, was returning on sick-leave from his government of the Brill, and this sudden departure of so eminent a personage, joined with the public disavowal of the recent transaction between Leicester and the provinces, was producing a general and most sickening apprehension as to the queen's good faith. The earl did not fail to urge these matters most warmly on the consideration of the English council, setting forth that the states were stanch for the war, but that they would be beforehand with her if she attempted by underhand means to compass a peace. "If these men once smell any such matter," wrote Leicester to Burghley, "be sure they will soon come before you, to the utter overthrow of her Majesty and state forever."²

The earl was suspecting the "false boys" by whom he

¹ Leicester to Burghley, March 17. 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² *Ibid.*

was surrounded, although it was impossible for him to perceive, as we have been enabled to do, the wide-spread and intricate meshes by which he was enveloped. "Your papists in England," said he, "have sent over word to some in this company that all that they ever hoped for is come to pass, that my Lord of Leicester shall be called away in greatest indignation with her Majesty, and to confirm this of Champagny, I have myself seen a letter that her Majesty is in hand with a secret peace. God forbid! for if it be so, her Majesty, her realm, and we are all undone."¹

The feeling in the provinces was still sincerely loyal toward England. "These men," said Leicester, "yet honor and most dearly love her Majesty, and hardly, I know, will be brought to believe ill of her anyway." Nevertheless, these rumors to the discredit of her good faith were doing infinite harm, while the earl, although keeping his eyes and ears wide open, was anxious not to compromise himself any further with his sovereign by appearing himself to suspect her of duplicity. "Good my lord," he besought Burghley, "do not let her Majesty know of this concerning Champagny as coming from me, for she will think it is done for my own cause, which, by the Lord God, it is not, but even on the necessity of the case for her own safety, and the realm, and us all. Good my lord, as you will do any good in the matter, let not her Majesty understand any piece of it to come from me."²

The States-General, on the 25th March (N. S.), addressed a respectful letter to the queen, in reply to her vehement chidings. They expressed their deep regret

¹ Leicester to Burghley, March 17, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Ibid.

that her Majesty should be so offended with the election of the Earl of Leicester as absolute governor. They confessed that she had just cause of displeasure, but hoped that when she should be informed of the whole matter she would rest better satisfied with their proceedings. They stated that the authority was the same which had been previously bestowed upon governors-general, observing that by the word "absolute," which had been used in designation of that authority, nothing more had been intended than to give to the earl full power to execute his commission, while the *sovereignty of the country was reserved to the people*. This commission, they said, could not be without danger revoked. And therefore they most humbly besought her Majesty to approve what had been done, and to remember its conformity with her own advice to them, that a multitude of heads, whereby confusion in the government is bred, should be avoided.¹

Leicester, upon the same occasion, addressed a letter to Burghley and Walsingham, expressing himself as

¹ The letter is given in Meteren, xii. 234. Wagenaer (viii. 121, note 4) observes very correctly that, when the states were thus glibly explaining away the word "absolute," they had either not read over very carefully the commission granted by themselves to Leicester, or trusted that the queen would not closely examine that document. In this original contract with the earl were these words: "Item, his Excellency shall have full authority and absolute power (volle macht en absoluyt geweld) within the provinces in the matter of policy and justice (in 't stuck van de politie en justitie)." Compare Bor, ii. 686; Groot Plakkaatboek, iv. 81. Meteren, ubi sup.

Bor, Meteren, and many contemporary writers, as well as Wagenaer and other more modern authorities, are quite mistaken in representing the whole angry demonstration made by the queen in regard to this acceptance by Leicester of the "absolute"

became a crushed and contrite man, nevermore to raise his drooping head again, but warmly and manfully urging upon the attention of the English government, for the honor and interest of the queen herself, "the miserable state of the poor soldiers." The necessity of immediate remittances in order to keep them from starving was most imperious. For himself, he was smothering his wretchedness until he should learn her Majesty's final decision as to what was to become of him. "Meantime," said he, "I carry my grief inward, and will proceed, till her Majesty's full pleasure come, with as little discouragement to the cause as I can. I pray God her Majesty may do that may be best for herself. For my own part, my heart is broken, but not by the enemy."¹

There is no doubt that the public disgrace thus inflicted upon the broken-hearted governor, and the severe censure administered to the states by the queen, were both ill-timed and undeserved. Whatever his disingenuousness toward Davison, whatever his disobedience to Elizabeth, however ambitious his own secret motives may have been, there is no doubt at all that thus far he had borne himself well in his great office.

Richard Cavendish, than whom few had better opportunities of judging, spoke in strong language on the subject. "It is a thing almost incredible," said he, "that the care and diligence of any one man living could, in government as a farce, and a farce which had been previously arranged. We have seen from the private letters of the period how very genuine was the ill humor of Elizabeth.

The state council also, on the 27th March, 1586 (N. S.), addressed a letter to the queen of similar tenor to that written by the States-General. Printed in Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, Append., 468, 469.

¹ Leicester to Burghley and Walsingham, March 15, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

so small time, have so much repaired so disjointed and loose an estate as my lord found this country in. But lest he should swell in pride of that his good success, your Lordship knoweth that God hath so tempered the cause with the construction thereof as may well hold him in good consideration of human things.”¹ He alluded with bitterness, as did all men in the Netherlands who were not open or disguised papists, to the fatal rumors concerning the peace negotiations in connection with the recall of Leicester. “There be here advertisements of most fearful instance,” he said, “namely, that Champagny doth not spare most liberally to bruit abroad that he hath in his hands the conditions of peace offered by her Majesty unto the king his master, and that it is in his power to conclude at pleasure—which fearful and mischievous plot, if in time it be not met withal by some notable encounter, it cannot but prove the root of great ruin.”²

The “false boys” about Leicester were indefatigable in spreading these rumors, and in taking advantage, with the assistance of the papists in the obedient provinces and in England, of the disgraced condition in which the queen had placed the favorite. Most galling to the haughty earl, most damaging to the cause of England, Holland, and liberty, were the tales to his discredit which circulated on the Bourse at Antwerp, Middelburg, Amsterdam, and in all the other commercial centers. The most influential bankers and merchants were assured by a thousand chattering, but as it were invisible, tongues that the queen had for a long time disliked Leicester; that he was a man of no account

¹ Cavendish to Burghley, March 18, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² *Ibid.*

among the statesmen of England; that he was a beggar and a bankrupt; that if he had waited two months longer, he would have made his appearance in the provinces with one man and one boy for his followers; that the queen had sent him thither to be rid of him; that she never intended him to have more authority than Sir John Norris had; that she could not abide the bestowing the title of Excellency upon him, and that she had not disguised her fury at his elevation to the post of governor-general.¹

All who attempted a refutation of these statements were asked, with a sneer, whether her Majesty had ever written a line to him, or in commendation of him, since his arrival. Minute inquiries were made by the Dutch merchants of their commercial correspondents, both in their own country and in England, as to Leicester's real condition and character at home. What was his rank, they asked, what his ability, what his influence at court? Why, if he were really of so high quality as had been reported, was he thus neglected and at last disgraced? Had he any landed property in England? Had he really ever held any other office but that of master of the horse? "And then," asked one particular busybody, who made himself very unpleasant on the Amsterdam Exchange, "why has her Majesty forbidden all noblemen and gentlemen from coming hither, as was the case at the beginning? Is it because she is harkening to a peace? And if it be so," quoth he, "we are well handled; for if her Majesty hath sent a disgraced man to amuse us, while she is secretly working a peace for herself, when we, on the contrary, had broken off all our negotiations, upon confidence of her Majesty's goodness,

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 214-219, April 5 (15), 1586.

such conduct will be remembered to the end of the world, and the Hollanders will never abide the name of England again." ¹

On such a bed of nettles there was small chance of repose for the governor. Some of the rumors were even more stinging. So incomprehensible did it seem that the proud sovereign of England should send over her subjects to starve or beg in the streets of Flushing and Ostend that it was darkly intimated that Leicester had embezzled the funds which, no doubt, had been remitted for the poor soldiers.² This was the most cruel blow of all. The earl had been put to enormous charges. His household at The Hague cost him a thousand pounds a month. He had been paying and furnishing five hundred and fifty men out of his own purse. He had also a choice regiment of cavalry, numbering seven hundred and fifty horse, three hundred and fifty of which number were over and above those allowed for by the queen, and were entirely at his expense. He was most liberal in making presents of money to every gentleman in his employment. He had deeply mortgaged his estates in order to provide for these heavy demands upon him, and professed his willingness "to spend more, if he might have got any more money for his land that was left";³ and in the face of such unquestionable facts—much to the credit, certainly, of his generosity—he was accused of swindling a queen whom neither Jew nor Gentile had ever yet been sharp enough to swindle, while he was in reality plunging forward in a course of reckless extravagance in order to obviate the fatal effects of her penuriousness.

¹ Bruce's *Leye. Corresp.*, 214-219, April 5 (15), 1586.

² *Ibid.*, 216.

³ *Ibid.*, 214-219.

Yet these sinister reports were beginning to have a poisonous effect. Already an alteration of mien was perceptible in the States-General. "Some buzzing there is amongst them," said Leicester, "whatsoever it be. They begin to deal very strangely within these few days."¹ Moreover, the industry of the Poleys, Blunts, and Pagets had turned these unfavorable circumstances to such good account that a mutiny had been near breaking out among the English troops. "And, before the Lord I speak it," said the earl, "I am sure some of these good townes had been gone ere this, but for my money. As for the states, I warrant you, they see day at a little hole. God doth know what a forward and a joyful country here was within a month. God send her Majesty to recover it so again, and to take care of it, on the condition she send me after Sir Francis Drake to the Indies, my service here being no more acceptable."²

Such was the aspect of affairs in the provinces after the first explosion of the queen's anger had become known. Meanwhile the court weather was very changeable in England, being sometimes serene, sometimes cloudy, always treacherous. Mr. Vavasour, sent by the earl with despatches to her Majesty and the council, had met with a sufficiently benignant reception. She accepted the letters, which, however, owing to a bad cold, with a defluxion in the eyes, she was unable at once to read; but she talked ambiguously with the messenger. Vavasour took pains to show the immediate necessity of sending supplies, so that the armies in the Netherlands might take the field at the earliest possible moment. "And what," said she, "if a peace should come in the meantime?"³

Leyc. Corresp., 214-219.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., 194, 195, March 31 (April 10), 1586.

"If your Majesty desireth a convenient peace," replied Vavasour, "to take the field is the readiest way to obtain it, for as yet the King of Spain hath had no reason to fear you. He is daily expecting that your own slackness may give your Majesty an overthrow. Moreover, the Spaniards are soldiers, and are not to be moved by shadows."¹

But the queen had no ears for these remonstrances, and no disposition to open her coffers. A warrant for twenty-four thousand pounds² had been signed by her at the end of the month of March, and was about to be sent when Vavasour arrived; but it was not possible for him, although assisted by the eloquence of Walsingham and Burghley, to obtain an enlargement of the pittance. "The storms are overblown," said Walsingham, "but I fear your Lordship shall receive very scarce measure from hence. You will not believe how the sparing humor doth increase upon us."³

Nor were the storms so thoroughly overblown but that there were not daily indications of returning foul weather. Accordingly, after a conference with Vavasour, Burghley and Walsingham had an interview with the queen, in which the lord treasurer used bold and strong language. He protested to her that he was bound, both by his duty to himself and his oath as her councilor, to declare that the course she was holding to Lord Leicester was most dangerous to her own honor, interest, and safety. If she intended to continue in this line of

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 194, 195, March 31 (April 10), 1586.

² This sum added to the fifty-two thousand pounds already advanced made seventy-six thousand pounds in all, "which," said Burghley, "her Majesty doth often repeat with great offense."—Ibid., 199, same date.

³ Ibid., 191, March 28 (April 7), 1586.

conduct, he begged to resign his office of lord treasurer, wishing, before God and man, to wash his hands of the shame and peril which he saw could not be avoided. The queen, astonished at the audacity of Burghley's attitude and language, hardly knew whether to chide him for his presumption or to listen to his arguments. She did both. She taxed him with insolence in daring to address her so roundly, and then finding he was speaking even *in amaritudine animæ* and out of a clear conscience, she became calm again, and intimated a disposition to qualify her anger against the absent earl.¹

Next day, to their sorrow, the two councilors found that the queen had again changed her mind, "as one that had been by some adverse counsel seduced." She expressed the opinion that affairs would do well enough in the Netherlands, even though Leicester were displaced. A conference followed between Walsingham, Hatton, and Burghley, and then the three went again to her Majesty. They assured her that if she did not take immediate steps to satisfy the states² and the people of the provinces, she would lose those countries and her own honor at the same time, and that then they would prove a source of danger to her instead of protection and glory. At this she was greatly troubled, and agreed to do anything they might advise consistently with her honor. It was then agreed that Leicester should be continued in the government which he had accepted until the matter should be further considered, and letters to that effect were at once written. Then came a messenger from Sir Thomas Heneage, bringing despatches from that

¹ Bruce's, *Leyc. Corresp.*, 197, March 31 (April 10), 1586.

² *Ibid.*, 198, same date.

envoy, and a second and most secret one from the earl himself. Burghley took the precious letter which the favorite had addressed to his royal mistress, and had occasion to observe its magical effect.¹ Walsingham and the lord treasurer had been right in so earnestly remonstrating with him on his previous silence.

“She read your letter,” said Burghley, “and, in very truth, I found her princely heart touched with favorable interpretation of your actions, affirming them to be only offensive to her *in that she was not made privy to them, not now misliking that you had the authority.*”²

Such, at fifty-three, was Elizabeth Tudor. A gentle whisper of idolatry from the lips of the man she loved, and she was wax in his hands. Where now were the vehement protestations of horror that her public declaration of principles and motives had been set at naught? Where now were her vociferous denunciations of the states, her shrill invectives against Leicester, her big oaths, and all the *hysterica passio*, which had sent poor Lord Burghley to bed with the gout, and inspired the soul of Walsingham with dismal forebodings? Her anger had dissolved into a shower of tenderness, and if her parsimony still remained, it was because that could only vanish when she, too, should cease to be.

¹ This letter was probably very tender and personal, for no trace of it is to be found in the English Archives.

² Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 198, 199, March 31 (April 10), 1586; and three weeks later, after the news of the success of the earl before Grave (to be described in a subsequent chapter) had reached England, Walsingham observed to Leicester: “I do assure your Lordship I think her Majesty took as much joy upon the view of your letter, in seeing you restored to your former comfort, grounded upon her favor, as she did in the overthrow of the enemy.”—*Ibid.*, 230, April 21 (May 1), 1586.

And thus, for a moment, the grave diplomatic difference between the crown of England and their High Mightinesses the United States, upon the solution of which the fate of Christendom was hanging, seemed to shrink to the dimensions of a lovers' quarrel. Was it not strange that the letter had been so long delayed?

Davison had exhausted argument in defense of the acceptance by the earl of the authority conferred by the states, and had gained nothing by his eloquence save abuse from the queen and acrimonious censure from the earl. He had deeply offended both by pleading the cause of the erring favorite when the favorite should have spoken for himself. "Poor Mr. Davison," said Walsingham, "doth take it very grievously that your Lordship should conceive so hardly of him as you do. I find the conceit of your Lordship's disfavor hath greatly dejected him. But at such time as he arrived her Majesty was so incensed as all the arguments and orators in the world could not have wrought any satisfaction."¹

But now a little billet-doux had done what all the orators in the world could not do. The arguments remained the same, but the queen no longer "misliked that Leicester should have the authority." It was natural that the lord treasurer should express his satisfaction at this auspicious result.

"I did commend her princely nature," he said, "in allowing your good intention, and excusing you of any spot of evil meaning; and I thought good to hasten her resolution, which you must now take to come from a favorable good mistress. You must strive with your nature to throw over your shoulder that which is past."²

¹ Bruce, *Leyc. Corresp.*, 206, April 1 (11), 1586.

² *Ibid.*, 199, March 31 (April 10), 1586.

Sir Walter Raleigh, too, who had been "falsely and pestilently" represented to the earl as an enemy, rather than what he really was, a most ardent favorer of the Netherland cause, wrote at once to congratulate him on the change in her Majesty's demeanor. "The queen is in very good terms with you now," he said, "and, thanks be to God, well pacified, and *you are again her 'sweet Robin.'*"¹

Sir Walter wished to be himself the bearer of the comforting despatches to Leicester, on the ground that he had been represented as an "ill instrument against him," and in order that he might justify himself against the charge with his own lips. The queen, however, while professing to make use of Shirley as the messenger, bade Walsingham declare to the earl, upon her honor, that Raleigh had done good offices for him, and that, in the time of her anger, he had been as earnest in his defense as the best friend could be. It would have been singular, indeed, had it been otherwise. "Your Lordship," said Sir Walter, "doth well understand my affection toward Spain, and how I have consumed the best part of my fortune, hating the tyrannous prosperity of that state. It were strange and monstrous that I should now become an enemy to my country and conscience. All that I have desired at your Lordship's hands is that you will evermore deal directly with me in all matters of suspect doubleness, and so ever esteem me as you shall find me deserving good or bad. In the meantime, let no poetical scribe work your Lordship by any device to doubt that I am a hollow or cold servant to the action."²

¹ Bruce's *Leyce. Corresp.*, 193, 194, March 29 (April 8), 1586.

² *Ibid.*

It was now agreed that letters should be drawn up authorizing Leicester to continue in the office which he held until the state council should devise some modification in his commission. As it seemed, however, very improbable that the board would devise anything of the kind, Burghley expressed the belief that the country was like to continue in the earl's government without any change whatever. The lord treasurer was also of opinion that the queen's letters to Leicester would convey as much comfort as he had received discomfort, although he admitted that there was a great difference. The former letters he knew had deeply wounded his heart, while the new ones could not suddenly sink so low as the wound.¹

The despatch to the States-General was benignant, elaborate, slightly diffuse. The queen's letter to "sweet Robin" was caressing, but argumentative.

"It is always thought," said she, "in the opinion of the world, a hard bargain when both parties are losers, and so doth fall out in the case between us two. You, as we hear, are greatly grieved in respect of the great displeasure you find we have conceived against you. We are no less grieved that a subject of ours of that quality that you are, a creature of our own, and one that hath always received an extraordinary portion of our favor above all our subjects, even from the beginning of our reign, should deal so carelessly, not to say contemptuously, as to give the world just cause to think that we are had in contempt by him that ought most to respect and reverence us, which, we do assure you, hath wrought as great grief in us as any one thing that ever happened unto us.

¹ Bruce, *Leyc. Corresp.*, 202, March 31 (April 10), 1586.

“We are persuaded that you, that have so long known us, cannot think that ever we could have been drawn to have taken so hard a course therein had we not been provoked by an extraordinary cause. But for that your grieved and wounded mind hath more need of comfort than reproof, who, we are persuaded, though the act of contempt can noways be excused, had no other meaning and intent than to advance our service, we think meet to forbear to dwell upon a matter wherein we ourselves do find so little comfort, assuring you that whosoever professeth to love you best taketh not more comfort of your well-doing, or discomfort of your evil-doing, than ourself.”¹

After this affectionate preface she proceeded to intimate her desire that the earl should take the matter as nearly as possible into his own hands. It was her wish that he should retain the *authority* of absolute governor, but, if it could be so arranged, that he should dispense with the *title*, retaining only that of her lieutenant-general. It was not her intention, however, to create any confusion or trouble in the provinces, and she was therefore willing that the government should remain upon precisely the same footing as that on which it then stood, until circumstances should permit the change of title which she suggested. And the whole matter was referred to the wisdom of Leicester, who was to advise with Heneage and such others as he liked to consult, although it was expressly stated that the present arrangement was to be considered a provisional and not a final one.²

¹ Bruce, Leye. Corresp., 209, April 1 (11), 1586.

² Ibid. Queen to Leicester, March 30 (April 9), 1586, S. P. Office MS. On the day before she had addressed a shorter letter of similar tenor to the earl.

In her letters of the same date to Heneage, she congratulated

Until this soothing intelligence could arrive in the Netherlands the suspicions concerning the underhand negotiations with Spain grew daily more rife, and the

both herself and the envoy that he had not been so precipitate in executing as she had been in ordaining the condign and public chastisement of the great delinquent. Sir Thomas might, in the humor in which the queen now found herself, have even ventured upon a still longer delay, and a more decided mitigation, of the sentence. Tender, indeed, was the tone, compared with that in which she had so lately communicated her sentiments to the departing diplomatist, in which she now expressed her satisfaction that he had not been hasty in obeying "her secret directions touching the revocation of her cousin the earl's government."

"We perceive by your letters," she observed, "that if the same had been executed according to our first purpose, it would have wrought some dangerous alteration in the state there, and utterly have overthrown the reputation and credit of our cousin, no less prejudicial to our service than the utter defacing and overthrow of one whom we ourselves have raised up and have always found as greatly devoted to our service as ever sovereign found any subject. Though in his late proceeding touching the absolute government he did greatly forget himself, yet we would never have proceeded against him so severely had not our honor been touched. We are well persuaded that this offense and error grew not out of any evil meaning toward us, whose service we know he doth prefer even before his own life. And although we have assured him so much by our own letters, directed to him, yet we think meet you should labor by all means to comfort him, whose mind, as we understand from yourself and others, is greatly wounded and overthrown, and also to remove any hard opinion that may be formed against him, as a man quite shaken out of our favor."—Queen to Heneage, April 1 (11), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

She reiterated her instructions as to the repairing as handsomely as possible of the earl's broken heart, in a style which was almost pathetic.

"You have been an eye-witness," she said, "of the great love we have always borne him above any subject we have, and therefore you can easily guess the grief we should conceive if he should

discredit cast upon the earl more embarrassing. The private letters which passed between the earl's enemies in Holland and in England contained matter more

miscarry. We doubt not, therefore, that you will leave nothing undone that may salve his wounded mind and repair his credit, if you find the same decayed."

She was desirous that Sir Thomas should be the medium through which the earl's pardon should be communicated to the states, as he had already been the vehicle which had borne to them her wrath. Although, therefore, she had written to themselves very much at length, she had yet reserved certain points upon which they were referred to the envoy for details. This proceeding she intended as an especial compliment to Heneage. "Forasmuch," so she expressed herself, "as you have already yielded the one part of the scorpion which is to wound, we think that we should do you wrong if you should not deliver some matter of contentment whereby you may cure."—Ibid.

She then proceeded to handle the two points contained in the last missive of the States-General to herself. Upon the first, namely, that the absolute government conferred on the earl was not repugnant to the original treaty, and was offensive rather in name than in matter, she reasoned at considerable length. Her grounds of objection are, however, sufficiently well known. She considered that the acceptance, without her permission, savored of contempt, and that an implied permission on her part was an impeachment on the self-denying nature of her original declarations. She had been most anxious, therefore, lest "the world should condemn her as guilty of cunning and unprincely dealing"; nor had she seen the need of the extreme haste with which the matter had been concluded, without previous communication to herself.

As to the second point in the message of the states,—that the queen would be pleased to "stay the revocation of the authority granted" to Leicester, because of the imminent danger of such a proceeding,—her Majesty's benignity, compared with her ferocity but a few short weeks before, seemed almost incredible.

"You shall proceed, in the answering of this point," said she, "*according to such resolution as shall be taken by our cousin the earl,*

damaging to himself and to the cause which he had at heart than the more public reports of modern days can disseminate, which, being patent to all, can be more

upon debating the matter with you and such others as he shall call unto him for that purpose."—Ibid.

Just one fortnight before the earl had been forced to stand, as it were, in a white sheet, with candle in hand, before the state council. His heart had been broken in consequence, and he had resolved never again to appear in that chamber where he had been made to enact so sorry a part. Now a blank paper was furnished to himself and Heneage, which they were to inscribe with the most flattering expressions that could be desired from royal lips.

"You shall use all the persuasions you may," said Elizabeth, "to remove any opinion that may be conceived by the council of state to the hindrance or prejudice of our cousin the earl's former reputation, as though the qualification which we now seek proceeded of any dislike that we had of any honor that hath been or may be yielded to him. . . . Assure them that they can no way better show the good will they bear toward us than by continuing their former devotion toward the earl, of whose love and devotion toward us, you may tell them, we make that account as of no other subject more."—Ibid.

She then alluded to the reports "thrown abroad" that she had a secret intention of treating for her own peace with the enemy apart as "malicious bruits." "For as our fortune," said she, in the most explicit language which pen could write, "is so joined with theirs that the good or evil success of their affairs must needs harm or prosper ours, so you may assure them that we, for our part, are resolved to *do nothing that may concern them without their own knowledge and good liking.*"—Ibid.

The despatch to the States-General was very explicit on the subject of the title, but most affectionate in style.

"We find by your late letters," said the queen, "that you are greatly grieved through some dislike conceived by us against you in respect of the offer to our cousin of Leicester of the absolute government of the United Provinces being made without our privy, and contrary to our express commandment to the said

easily contradicted. Leicester incessantly warned his colleagues of her Majesty's council against the malignant manufacturers of intelligence. "I pray you, my

earl. We pray you, in this case, to consider that we were not rashly carried into this mislike, neither could we have been drawn into so hard and severe a course had we not been provoked by two things that do greatly import us in honor: the one, that the earl's acceptance, contrary to our commandment, might work in the opinion of the world that it proceeded of contempt; the other, that we sought to abuse the world, in pretending outwardly that our proceedings with those countries tended only to relieve them in their distressed state against such as sought to tyrannize them, when the acceptance of the absolute government by the earl, being a creature of our own, and known to be wholly at our devotion, could not but give them just cause to conceive otherwise of us. A matter we had just cause to look into, considering what a number of evil and malignant spirits do reign in these days, that are apt, upon the least advantage that may be, to deliver out hard and wicked censures of princes' doings."—Queen to the States-General, March 30 (April 9), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

The states were then reminded that, although there was nothing absolutely incompatible in the absolute government as accepted by Leicester with the nature of the original treaty, the queen had resolutely set her face from the beginning against any such step, because she was "loath to give the world cause to think that she was moved by any other respect to assist them than by the love she bore them, and the commiseration she had for their affliction."—*Ibid.*

"And therefore," she continued, "seeing there was no special matter contained in the treaty that might anyway give him any authority to accept the offer, reason would that before the matter had been proceeded in we had been first made acquainted therewith. For we do not see, for anything that yet hath been declared unto us touching certain pretended dangers, but that the acceptance thereof might have been delayed until our pleasure had been first known. We hope that you have put on that conceit of us, as we would have been loath, either in respect of yourselves or of our cousin the earl, to have proceeded so severely as we intended,

lords, as you are wise," said he, "beware of them all. You shall find them here to be *shrewd pickthanks*, and hardly worth the harkening unto."¹

He complained bitterly of the disgrace that was heaped upon him, both publicly and privately, and of the evil consequences which were sure to follow from the course

if we had not been justly provoked thereunto. For yourselves, our love toward you cannot more plainly appear than in that we do oppose ourselves, for your sake, unto one of the mightiest potentates in Europe, without regard either to the expense of our treasure or of our subjects' lives. And as touching the earl, all the world knoweth that he is one of our own raising, and we do acknowledge that no man can carry more love than he hath ever showed to bear toward us. And touching the cause of this our present offense, we do acknowledge our persuasion that the same proceeded of no evil meaning toward us, though good intents many times bring forth dangerous and evil fruits. If the offense had not grown out of a public and open action, none would have been more ready to have hidden the same than ourselves. Therefore we pray you to think that this mislike of ours hath grown rather out of grief, in respect of the love we bear him, than out of indignation, as one of whom we have conceived a sinister opinion, whom we do esteem as greatly devoted toward us as ever subject was to prince; and so we hope you will use him, without either diminishing any part of that good will and love that you have hitherto professed toward him, or leaving that respect that is due unto him as our minister, or that he may justly challenge at your hands, who, for your sakes, is content to expose both his life and fortune unto any peril, which is not the least cause why we esteem so greatly of him. And whereas by your late letters you have signified that the commission and authority granted unto him cannot be revoked without great peril to the state, we have given authority to our cousin the earl, and to our servant, Sir Thomas Heneage, to confer with you upon some course to be taken, as we conceive both our honor may be saved and the peril avoided. We pray you to bend yourselves to do that, as both the one and the other may be provided for."—Ibid.

¹ Leicester to Burghley, April 6 (16), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

pursued. "Never was man so villainously handled by letters out of England as I have been," said he, "not only advertising her Majesty's great dislike with me before this my coming over, but that I was an odious man in England, and so long as I tarried here that no help was to be looked for, that her Majesty would send no more men or money, and that I was used here but for a time till a peace were concluded between her Majesty and the Prince of Parma. What the continuance of a man's discredit thus will turn out is to be thought of, for better I were a thousand times displaced than that her Majesty's great advantage of so notable provinces should be hindered."¹

As to the peace negotiations, which, however cunningly managed, could not remain entirely concealed, the earl declared them to be as idle as they were disingenuous. "I will boldly pronounce that all the peace you can make in the world, leaving these countries," said he to Burghley, "will never prove other than a fair spring for a few days, to be all over blasted with a hard storm after."² Two days later her Majesty's comforting letters arrived, and the earl began to raise his drooping head. Heneage, too, was much relieved, but he was, at the same time, not a little perplexed. It was not so easy to undo all the mischief created by the queen's petulance. The "scorpion's sting," as her Majesty expressed herself, might be balsamed, but the poison had spread far beyond the original wound.

"The letters just brought in," wrote Heneage to Burghley, "have well relieved a most noble and sufficient servant, but I fear they will not restore the much-

¹ Leicester to Burghley, April 6 (16), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Ibid.

repaired wrecks of these far-decayed noble countries into the same state I found them in. A loose, disordered, and unknit state needs no shaking, but propping. A subtle and fearful kind of people should not be made more distrustful, but assured.”¹ He then expressed annoyance at the fault already found with him, and surely if ever man had cause to complain of reproofs administered him, in quick succession, for not obeying contradictory directions following upon each other as quickly, that man was Sir Thomas Heneage. He had been, as he thought, over-cautious in administering the rebuke to the earl’s arrogance which he had been expressly sent over to administer; but scarcely had he accomplished his task, with as much delicacy as he could devise, when he found himself censured, not for dilatoriness, but for haste. “*Fault I perceive,*” said he to Burghley, “*is found in me, not by your Lordship, but by some other, that I did not stay proceeding if I found the public cause might take hurt.* It is true I had good warrant for the manner, the place, and the persons, but for *the matter none, for done it must be.* Her Majesty’s offense must be declared. Yet if I did not all I possibly could to uphold the cause, and to keep the tottering cause upon the wheels, I deserve no thanks, but reproof.”²

Certainly, when the blasts of royal rage are remembered by which the envoy had been, as it were, blown out of England into Holland, it is astonishing to find his actions censured for undue precipitancy. But it was not the first, nor was it likely to be the last time for comparatively subordinate agents in Elizabeth’s government to be distressed by contradictory commands,

¹ Heneage to Burghley, April 8 (18), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² *Ibid.*

when the sovereign did not know, or did not choose to make known, her own mind on important occasions. "Well, my lord," said plaintive Sir Thomas, "wiser men may serve more pleasingly and happily, but never shall any serve her Majesty more faithfully and heartily. And so I cannot be persuaded her Majesty thinketh; for from herself I find nothing but most sweet and gracious favor, though by others' censures I may gather otherwise of her judgment, which I confess doth cumber me."¹

He was destined to be cumbered more than once before these negotiations should be concluded, but meantime there was a brief gleam of sunshine. The English friends of Leicester in the Netherlands were enchanted with the sudden change in the queen's humor; and to Lord Burghley, who was not, in reality, the most stanch of the absent earl's defenders, they poured themselves out in profuse and somewhat superfluous gratitude.²

Cavendish, in strains exultant, was sure that Burghley's children, grandchildren, and remotest posterity would rejoice that their great ancestor, in such a time of need, had been "found and felt to be indeed *pater patriæ*, a good father to a happy land." And although unwilling to "stir up the old Adam" in his Lordship's soul, he yet took the liberty of comparing the lord

¹ Letter to Burghley, MS. last cited.

² North to Burghley, April 9 (19), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

No greater mistake could have been made than to insinuate, as Leicester's English correspondents had insinuated, that North was a secret enemy to Leicester, and had maligned him in his letters to influential personages at home. I have read many of North's unpublished letters to Burghley and other statesmen, and they all speak of the earl in strongest language of admiration and attachment.

treasurer, in his old and declining years, to Mary Magdalene, assuring him that, forever after, when the tale of the preservation of the Church of God, of her Majesty, and of the Netherland cause, which were all one, should be told, his name and well-doing would be held in memory also.¹

And truly there was much of honest and generous enthusiasm, even if couched in language somewhat startling to the ears of a colder and more material age, in the hearts of these noble volunteers. They were fighting the cause of England, of the Netherland Republic, and of human liberty, with a valor worthy the best days of English chivalry, against manifold obstacles, and they were certainly not too often cheered by the beams of royal favor.

It was a pity that a dark cloud was so soon again to sweep over the scene. For the temper of Elizabeth at this important juncture seemed as capricious as the

¹ Richard Cavendish to Burghley, April 8 (18), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

“It may please you to think with yourself what a favor the Lord hath herein bestowed upon you in these your old and declining years, namely, from your good and happy labors to adorn your posterity with the note of this most just and worthy renown, that such a father, a grandfather, or ancestor of theirs, in such a needful time, was both found and felt to be indeed *pater patriæ*, a good father to a happy land. Suspicion of flattery ought of right to be secluded where assured truth doth enforce the conclusion. Neither do I write this to stir up in your Lordship old Adam, but knowing you well have learned Christ, I do it only to quicken in you the joy of well-doing, grounded upon faith. For if the Lord himself refrained not to add unto Mary Magdalene’s well-doing this ornament unto her name forever, that wheresoever the gospel should be preached there should also the memorial of that her act be had in record, then doubt I not but that example may well warrant me,” etc.

April weather in which the scenes were enacting. We have seen the genial warmth of her letters and messages to Leicester, to Heneage, to the States-General, on the 1st of the month. Nevertheless, it was hardly three weeks after they had been despatched when Walsingham and Burghley found her Majesty one morning in a towering passion because the earl had not already laid down the government. The lord treasurer ventured to remonstrate, but was bid to hold his tongue. Ever variable and mutable as woman, Elizabeth was perplexing and baffling to her counselors, at this epoch, beyond all divination. The "sparing humor" was increasing fearfully, and she thought it would be easier for her to slip out of the whole expensive enterprise provided Leicester were merely her lieutenant-general, and not stadholder for the provinces. Moreover, the secret negotiations for peace were producing a deleterious effect upon her mind. Upon this subject the queen and Burghley, notwithstanding his resemblance to Mary Magdalene, were better informed than the secretary, whom, however, it had been impossible wholly to deceive. The man who could read secrets so far removed as the Vatican was not to be blinded to intrigues going on before his face. The queen, without revealing more than she could help, had been obliged to admit that informal transactions were pending, but had authorized the secretary to assure the United States that no treaty would be made without their knowledge and full concurrence. "She doth think," wrote Walsingham to Leicester, "that you should, if you shall see no cause to the contrary, acquaint the council of state there that certain overtures of peace are daily made unto her, but that she meaneth not to proceed therein *without their*

good liking and privity, being persuaded that there can no peace be made profitable or sure for her that shall not also stand with their safety; and she doth acknowledge hers to be so linked with theirs as nothing can fall out to their prejudice but she must be partaker of their harm."¹

This communication was dated on the 21st April, exactly three weeks after the queen's letter to Heneage, in which she had spoken of the "malicious bruits" concerning the pretended peace negotiations; and the secretary was now confirming, by her order, what she had then stated under her own hand, that she would "do nothing that might concern them without *their own knowledge and good liking*."

And surely nothing could be more reasonable. Even if the strict letter of the August treaty between the queen and the states did not provide against any separate negotiations by the one party without the knowledge of the other, there could be no doubt at all that its spirit absolutely forbade the clandestine conclusion of a peace with Spain by England alone, or by the Netherlands alone, and that such an arrangement would be disingenuous, if not positively dishonorable.

Nevertheless, it would almost seem that Elizabeth had been taking advantage of the day when she was writing her letter to Heneage on the 1st of April. Never was painstaking envoy more elaborately trifled with. On the 26th of the month, and only five days after the communication by Walsingham just noticed, the queen was furious that any admission should have been made to the states of their right to participate with her in peace negotiations.

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 232, April 21 (May 1), 1586.

"We find that Sir Thomas Heneage," said she to Leicester, "hath gone further, in assuring the states that we would make no peace without their privity and assent, than he had commission; for that our direction was—if our meaning had been well set down, and not mistaken by our secretary—that they should have been only let understand that in any treaty that might pass between us and Spain they might be well assured we would have no less care of their safety than of our own."¹

Secretary Walsingham was not likely to mistake her Majesty's directions in this or any other important affair of state.² Moreover, it so happened that the queen had, in her own letter to Heneage, made the same statement which she now chose to disavow. She had often a convenient way of making herself misunderstood, when she thought it desirable to shift responsibility from her own shoulders upon those of others; but upon this occasion she had been sufficiently explicit. Nevertheless, a scapegoat was necessary, and unhappy the subordinate who happened to be within her Majesty's reach when a vicarious sacrifice was to be made. Sir Francis Walsingham was not a man to be browbeaten or hoodwinked, but

¹ Queen to Leicester, April 26 (May 6), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

Almost the same words were used in a letter to Sir Thomas Heneage of the same date, April 26 (May 6), 1586, S. P. Office MS. Printed also in Bruce, p. 241, from a copy in the handwriting of Heneage in the British Museum.

² "When she chargeth your Lordship," wrote Walsingham to Leicester, May 20 (30), 1586, "with the acquainting the council of state there with the overtures of peace made unto her by the Prince of Parma as a fault, herein your Lordship is wronged, for the fault is mine, if any were committed. *But in very truth she gave me commandment to direct you to acquaint them withal, though now she doth deny it.* I have received within these few days many of these hard measures."—Bruce's Leye. Corresp., p. 272.

Heneage was doomed to absorb a fearful amount of royal wrath.

“What phlegmatical reasons soever were made you,” wrote the queen, who but three weeks before had been so gentle and affectionate to her ambassador, “how happeneth it that you will not remember that when a man hath faulted and committed by abettors thereto, neither the one nor the other will willingly make their own retreat? Jesus! what availeth wit when it fails the owner at greatest need? Do that you are bidden, and leave your considerations for your own affairs. For in some things you had clear commandment, which you did not, and in others none, and did. We princes be wary enough of our bargains. Think you I will be bound by your own speech to *make no peace for mine own matters without their consent? It is enough that I injure not their country nor themselves in making peace for them without their consent.* I am assured of your dutiful thoughts, but I am utterly at squares with this childish dealing.”¹

Blasted by this thunderbolt falling upon his head out of serenest sky, the sad Sir Thomas remained, for a time, in a state of political annihilation. “Sweet Robin” meanwhile, though stunned, was unscathed, thanks to the convenient conductor at his side. For, in Elizabeth’s court, mediocrity was not always golden, nor was it usually the loftiest mountains that the lightnings smote. The earl was deceived by his royal mistress, kept in the dark as to important transactions, left to provide for his famishing soldiers as he best might; but the queen at

¹ Queen to Heneage, April 26 (May 6), 1586, S. P. Office MS. Printed also in Bruce, p. 243, from a copy in the handwriting of Heneage in the British Museum.



WILLIAM CECIL, LORD BURLEIGH

Painted by Marc Gheeraedts, the Elder. In the
possession of the Marquis of Salisbury,
Hatfield House.

that moment, though angry, was not disposed to trample upon him. Now that his heart was known to be broken, and his sole object in life to be retirement to remote regions,—India¹ or elsewhere,—there to languish out the brief remainder of his days in prayers for Elizabeth's happiness, Elizabeth was not inclined very bitterly to upbraid him. She had too recently been employing herself in binding up his broken heart, and pouring balm into the "scorpion's sting," to be willing so soon to deprive him of those alleviations.

Her tone was, however, no longer benignant, and her directions were extremely peremptory. On the 1st of April she had congratulated Leicester, Heneage, the states, and all the world, that her secret commands had been stayed, and that the ruin which would have followed, had those decrees been executed according to her first violent wish, was fortunately averted. Heneage was even censured, not by herself, but by courtiers in her confidence, and with her concurrence, for being *over-hasty* in going before the state council, as he had done, with her messages and commands. On the 26th of April she expressed astonishment that Heneage had dared to be *so dilatory*, and that the title of governor had not been laid down by Leicester "*out of hand.*"² She marveled greatly, and found it very strange that "ministers in matters of moment should presume to do things of their own head without direction."³ She accordingly gave orders that there should be no more dallying, but that the earl should immediately hold a conference with the state council in order to arrange a

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., p. 217.

² Queen to Leicester, April 26 (May 6), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ Ibid.

modification in his commission. It was her pleasure that he should retain all the authority granted to him by the states, but, as already intimated by her, that he should abandon the title of "absolute governor," and retain only that of her lieutenant-general.¹

Was it strange that Heneage, placed in so responsible a situation, and with the fate of England, of Holland, and perhaps of all Christendom, hanging in great measure upon this delicate negotiation, should be amazed at such contradictory orders and grieved by such inconsistent censures?

"To tell you my griefs and my lacks," said he to Walsingham, "would little please you or help me. Therefore I will say nothing, but think there was never man in so great a service received so little comfort and so contrarious directions. But *Dominus est adiutor in tribulationibus*. If it be possible, let me receive some certain direction, in following which I shall not offend her Majesty, what good or hurt soever I do besides."²

This certainly seemed a loyal and reasonable request, yet it was not one likely to be granted. Sir Thomas—perplexed, puzzled, blindfolded, and browbeaten; always endeavoring to obey orders, when he could comprehend them, and always hectoring and lecturing whether he obeyed them or not; ruined in purse by the expenses of a mission on which he had been sent without adequate salary; appalled at the disaffection waxing more formidable every hour in provinces which were recently so loyal to her Majesty, but which were now pervaded by a suspicion that there was double-dealing upon her part

¹ Queen to Leicester, MS. last cited. See also queen to Heneage, same date, S. P. Office MS., and printed in Bruce, p. 242.

² Heneage to Walsingham, May 3 (13), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

—became quite sick of his life. He fell seriously ill, and was disappointed when, after a time, the physicians declared him convalescent. For when he rose from his sick-bed, it was only to plunge once more, without a clue, into the labyrinth where he seemed to be losing his reason.

“It is not long,” said he to Walsingham, “since I looked to have written you no more letters, my extremity was so great. . . . But God’s will is best, otherwise I could have liked better to have cumbered the earth no longer, where I find myself contemned, and which I find no reason to see will be the better in the wearing. . . . It were better for her Majesty’s service that the directions which come were not contrarious one to another, and that those you would have serve might know what is meant, else they cannot but much deceive you, as well as displease you.”¹

Public opinion concerning the political morality of the English court was not gratifying, nor was it rendered more favorable by these recent transactions. “I fear,” said Heneage, “that the world will judge what Champany wrote in one of his letters out of England (which I have lately seen) to be over-true. His words be these: ‘Et de vray, c’est le plus fascheux et le plus incertain negocier de ceste court, que je pense soit au monde.’”² And so “hasting,” as he said, “with a weak body and a willing mind, to do, he feared, no good work,” he set forth from Middelburg to rejoin Leicester at Arnheim, in order to obey, as well as he could, the queen’s latest directions.³

¹ Heneage to Walsingham, May 7 (17), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Ibid.

³ Heneage to Burghley, same date, S. P. Office MS. “For her

But before he could set to work there came more "contrarious" orders. The last instructions, both to Leicester and himself, were that the earl should resign the post of governor absolute "out of hand," and the queen had been vehement in denouncing any delay on such an occasion. He was now informed that, after consulting with Leicester and with the state council, he was to return to England with the result of such deliberations. It could afterward be decided how the earl could retain all the authority of governor absolute, while bearing only the title of the queen's lieutenant-general.¹ "For her meaning is not," said Walsingham, "that his Lordship should presently give it over, for she foreseeth in her princely judgment that his giving over the government upon a sudden, and leaving those countries without a head or director, cannot but breed a most dangerous alteration there."² The secretary therefore stated the royal wish at present to be that the "renunciation of the title" should be delayed till Heneage could visit England, and subsequently return to Holland with her Majesty's further directions. Even the astute Walsingham was himself puzzled, however, while conveying these ambiguous orders, and he confessed that he was doubtful whether he had rightly comprehended the queen's intentions. Burghley, however, was better at Majesty's services," said he to the lord treasurer, as he had said to the secretary of state, "it were very convenient that such as you would have serve you here might know truly what you mean, and might accordingly have certain directions what to do. And surely hitherto so have not I had, which is the only cause why I cannot in this service please you there, which God knoweth I most care for, if I could tell how."

¹ Walsingham to Heneage, May 14 (24), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Same to same, same date.

guessing riddles than he was, and so Heneage was advised to rely chiefly upon Burghley.¹

But Heneage had now ceased to be interested in any enigmas that might be propounded by the English court, nor could he find comfort, as Walsingham had recommended he should do, in railing. "I wish I could follow your counsel," he said, "but sure the uttering of my choler doth little ease my grief or help my case."²

He rebuked, however, the inconsistency and the tergiversations of the government with a good deal of dignity. "This certainly shall I tell her Majesty," he said, "if I live to see her, that except a more constant course be taken with this inconstant people, it is not the blaming of her ministers will advance her Highness's service or better the state of things. And shall I tell you what they now say here of us,—I fear not without some cause,—even as Lipsius wrote of the French: '*De Gallis quidem enigmata veniunt, non veniunt, volunt, nolunt, audent, timent, omnia, ancipiti metu, suspensa et suspecta.*' God grant better, and ever keep you and help me."³

He announced to Burghley that he was about to attend a meeting of the state council the next day, for the purpose of a conference on these matters at Arnheim, and that he would then set forth for England to report pro-

¹ Walsingham to Heneage, MS. last cited. "This I take to be the substance of her Majesty's pleasure," said Sir Francis, "which she willed both the lord treasurer and Mr. Vice-Chamberlain, together with myself, to signify unto you, praying you, for that I think my lord treasurer hath best conceived her Majesty's meaning, that you will chiefly rely upon such direction as you shall receive from him."—MS. last cited.

² Heneage to Walsingham, May 25 (June 4), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ Ibid.

ceedings to her Majesty. He supposed, on the whole, that this was what was expected of him, but acknowledged it hopeless to fathom the royal intentions. Yet if he went wrong, he was always sure to make mischief, and, though innocent, to be held accountable for others' mistakes. "Every prick I make," said he, "is made a gash; and to follow the words of my directions from England is not enough, except I likewise see into your minds. And surely mine eyesight is not so good. But I will pray to God for his help herein. With all the wit I have, I will use all the care I can: first, to satisfy her Majesty, as God knoweth I have ever most desired; then, not to hurt this cause, but that I despair of."¹ Leicester, as may be supposed, had been much discomfited and perplexed during the course of these contradictory and perverse directions. There is no doubt whatever that his position had been made discreditable and almost ridiculous, while he was really doing his best, and spending large sums out of his private fortune to advance the true interests of the queen. He had become a suspected man in the Netherlands, having been, in the beginning of the year, almost adored as a Messiah. He had submitted to the humiliation which had been imposed upon him of being himself the medium to convey to the council the severe expressions of the queen's displeasure at the joint action of the States-General and himself. He had been comforted by the affectionate expressions with which that explosion of feminine and royal wrath had been succeeded. He was now again distressed by the peremptory command to do what was a disgrace to him and an irreparable detriment to the cause; yet he was humble and submissive, and only begged to be

¹ Heneage to Burghley, May 25 (June 4), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

allowed, as a remedy for all his anguish, to return to the sunlight of Elizabeth's presence. He felt that her course, if persisted in, would lead to the destruction of the Netherland commonwealth, and eventually to the downfall of England; and that the provinces, believing themselves deceived by the queen, were ready to revolt against an authority to which, but a short time before, they were so devotedly loyal. Nevertheless, he only wished to know what his sovereign's commands distinctly were, in order to set himself to their fulfilment. He had come from the camp before Nimwegen in order to attend the conference with the state council at Arnheim, and he would then be ready and anxious to despatch Heneage to England, to learn her Majesty's final determination.

He protested to the queen that he had come upon this arduous and perilous service only because he considered her throne in danger, and that this was the only means of preserving it; that, in accepting the absolute government, he had been free from all ambitious motives, but deeply impressed with the idea that only by so doing could he conduct the enterprise intrusted to him to the desired consummation; and he declared with great fervor that no advancement to high office could compensate him for this enforced absence from her. To be sent back even in disgrace would still be a boon to him, for he should cease to be an exile from her sight. He knew that his enemies had been busy in defaming him while he had been no longer there to defend himself, but his conscience acquitted him of any thought which was not for her happiness and glory. "Yet grievous it is to me," said he, in a tone of tender reproach, "that having left all—yea, all that may be imagined—for you, you

have left me for very little, even to the uttermost of all hard fortune. For what have I, unhappy man, to do here either with cause or country but for you?"¹

He stated boldly that his services had not been ineffective, that the enemy had never been in worse plight than now, that he had lost at least five thousand men in divers overthrows, and that, on the other hand, the people and towns of the seven provinces had been safely preserved. "Since my arrival," he said, "God hath blessed the action which you have taken in hand and committed to the charge of me, your poor unhappy servant. I have good cause to say somewhat for myself, for that I think I have as few friends to speak for me as any man."²

Nevertheless, as he warmly protested, his only wish was to return; for the country in which he had lost her favor, which was more precious than life, had become odious to him. The most lowly office in her presence was more to be coveted than the possession of unlimited power away from her. It was by these tender and soft insinuations, as the earl knew full well, that he was sure to obtain what he really coveted—her sanction for retaining the absolute government in the provinces. And most artfully did he strike the key.

"Most dear and gracious Lady," he cried, "my care and service here do breed me nothing but grief and unhappiness. I have never had your Majesty's good favor since I came into this charge—a matter that from my first beholding your eyes hath been most dear unto me above all earthly treasures. Never shall I love that place

¹ Leicester to the queen, May 23 (June 2), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Ibid.

or like that soil which shall cause the lack of it. Most gracious Lady, consider my long, true, and faithful heart toward you. Let not this unfortunate place here bereave me of that which, above all the world, I esteem there, which is your favor and your presence. I see my service is not acceptable, but rather more and more disliketh you. Here I can do your Majesty no service; there I can do you some, at the least rub your horse's heels—a service which shall be much more welcome to me than this, with all that these men may give me. I do, humbly and from my heart, prostrate at your feet, beg this grace at your sacred hands, that you will be pleased to let me return to my home service, with your favor, let the revocation be used in what sort shall please and like you. But if ever spark of favor was in your Majesty toward your old servant, let me obtain this my humble suit, protesting before the Majesty of all Majesties that there was no cause under heaven but his and yours, even for your own special and particular cause, I say, could have made me take this absent journey from you in hand. If your Majesty shall refuse me this, I shall think all grace clean gone from me, and I know my days will not be long.”¹

She must melt at this, thought “sweet Robin” to himself; and meantime, accompanied by Heneage, he proceeded with the conferences in the state-council chamber touching the modification of the title and the confirmation of his authority. This, so far as Walsingham could divine and Burghley fathom, was the present intention of the queen. He averred that he had ever sought most painfully to conform his conduct to her instructions as fast as they were received, and that he should continue

¹ Leicester to the queen, May 23 (June 2), 1586, MS. last cited.

so to do. On the whole, it was decided by the conference to let matters stand as they were for a little longer, and until after Heneage should have time once more to go and come. "The same manner of proceeding that was is now," said Leicester. "Your pleasure is declared to the council here as you have willed it. How it will fall out again in your Majesty's construction, the Lord knoweth."¹

Leicester might be forgiven for referring to higher powers for any possible interpretation of her Majesty's changing humor; but meantime, while Sir Thomas was getting ready for his expedition to England, the earl's heart was somewhat gladdened by more gracious messages from the queen. The alternation of emotions would, however, prove too much for him, he feared, and he was reluctant to open his heart to so unwonted a tenant as joy.

"But that my fear is such, most dear and gracious Lady," he said, "as my unfortunate destiny will hardly permit, whilst I remain here, any good acceptance of so simple a service as mine, I should greatly rejoice and comfort myself with the hope of your Majesty's most-prayed-for favor. But of late, being by your own sacred hand lifted even up into heaven with joy of your favor, I was by and by, without any new desert or offense at all, cast down and down again into the depth of all grief. God doth know, my dear and dread Sovereign, that after I first received your resolute pleasure by Sir Thomas Heneage I made neither stop nor stay, nor any excuse, to be rid of this place and to satisfy your command. . . . So much I dislike this place and fortune of mine as I desire nothing in the world so much as to

¹ Leicester to the queen, May 27 (June 6), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

be delivered, with your favor, from all charge here, fearing still some new cross of your displeasure to fall upon me, trembling continually with the fear thereof, in such sort as till I may be fully confirmed in my new regeneration of your wonted favor I cannot receive that true comfort which doth appertain to so great a hope. Yet I will not only acknowledge with all humbleness and dutiful thanks the exceeding joy these last blessed lines brought to my long-wearied heart, but will, with all true loyal affection, attend that further joy from your sweet self which may utterly extinguish all consuming fear away."¹

Poor Heneage, who likewise received a kind word or two after having been so capriciously and petulantly dealt with, was less extravagant in his expressions of gratitude. "The queen hath sent me a paper plaister, which must please for a time," he said. "God Almighty bless her Majesty ever, and best direct her."² He was on the point of starting for England, the bearer of the states' urgent entreaties that Leicester might retain the government, and of despatches announcing the recent success of the allies before Grave. "God prospereth the action in these countries beyond all expectation," he said, "which all amongst you will not be over-glad of, for somewhat I know."³ The intrigues of Grafigni,

¹ Leicester to the queen, May 27 (June 6), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Heneage to Walsingham, May 28 (June 7), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ *Ibid.* Just before the envoy had signified to the states the last change in the royal humor, the Netherland council of state had addressed a letter to the queen. In this document they had excused the celerity with which, moved by the necessity of the case, they had conferred the absolute government upon the earl. This measure, they said, passed by the unanimous vote of the

Champagny, and Bodman, with Croft, Burghley, and the others, were not so profound a secret as they could wish.

The tone adopted by Leicester has been made manifest in his letters to the queen. He had held the same language of weariness and dissatisfaction in his provinces, had wonderfully elevated the collapsed minds of the patriots, and filled the enemy with extreme consternation. The renewal of a general authority had laid an excellent foundation for completely restoring the Republic, had curbed the ferocious hearts of the enemy, had restrained the progress of a hostile army exulting in a career of extraordinary victories, and, with the blessing of God, had changed the fortunes of the war. The prosperity of the United Provinces had been restored by the dignity, virtue, and assiduous solicitude of the illustrious earl, and was daily on the increase. They had therefore thanked her Majesty for accepting so benignantly their excuses for the authority conferred, and for no longer requiring its diminution. They expressed the opinion that it would be perilous, in the fragile condition of the Republic, to change the word (*vocabulum*) "absolute government," which could only be done at a special session of the states, called for that purpose. They feared that by such a step, at the very moment of restored authority, they should throw prostrate all authority and overwhelm the commonwealth with confusion. They declared their determination to cherish the dignity and honor of Leicester as being, under God and her Majesty, the foundation of their existence and their felicity. The states of the provinces and all individuals were agreed in admiring and venerating his extraordinary prudence and assiduity. They acknowledged that the safety of the whole Republic depended upon the care of the governor, who, moved by his zeal for the true religion and his pity for their afflicted fortunes, had abandoned his private interests, his country, and the presence of his sovereign, to encounter all the adverse chances of their perturbed Republic. (Bruce, 469-471, May 1, 1586.)

Six weeks later (June 11, 1586, N. S.), after receiving the last communications of the queen, the council again addressed her in similar strain, intrusting their despatches to Heneage, who was

munications to his friends. He would not keep the office, he avowed, if they should give him "all Holland and Zealand, with all their appurtenances," and he was ready to resign at any moment. He was not "ceremonious for reputation," he said, but he gave warning that the Netherlanders would grow desperate if they found her Majesty dealing weakly or carelessly with

setting forth according to her commands. They expressed their deep affliction that she should again so urgently demand the abrogation of the government-general. Not to comply with a requisition so seriously and repeatedly made was, as they acknowledged, a grave offense. To comply with it, however, without manifest peril to the Republic, was impossible. For the whole conservation of authority depended upon the title and office of governor. If that should shake and vacillate, they feared that in this very beginning of their prosperity, which was, through Divine Providence, every day augmenting, all things would fall headlong into utter ruin, to the joy of the common enemy, to whom the authority conferred upon the earl was most formidable. For the lieutenancy of the queen, however great in itself, could never suffice to the administration of political affairs without the government-general, which could not be adjoined to the lieutenancy, but must proceed from the superior power residing in the States-General. Again, therefore, they most earnestly besought her Majesty to pardon the error which they had committed, through immoderate devotion to herself, and through the necessity of the times. Her sacred breast would, it was hoped, be moved to pretermitt the proposed revocation, which could only be accomplished by solemn convocation of the orders, and by exposing the whole affair to the world—a step which, on account of the fluctuation of men's minds and the insidious suggestions of the enemy, would be attended with infinite peril. They therefore most urgently demanded that the execution of her demand should be deferred, at least, to a more convenient season. For the rest, they referred the whole matter to the report of Heneage, who was about to return to England, fully instructed as to the views and wishes of the states. (Bruce's *Leyde. Corresp.*, 472, June 11, 1586, N. S.)

them. As for himself, he had already had enough of government. "I am weary, Mr. Secretary," he plaintively exclaimed, "indeed I am weary; but neither of pains nor travail. My ill hap that I can please her Majesty no better hath quite discouraged me."¹

He had recently, however, as we have seen, received some comfort, and he was still further encouraged, upon the eve of Heneage's departure, by receiving another affectionate epistle from the queen. Amends seemed at last to be offered for her long and angry silence, and the earl was deeply grateful.

"If it hath not been, my most dear and gracious Lady," said he, in reply, "no small comfort to your poor old servant to receive but one line of your blessed handwriting in many months, for the relief of a most grieved, wounded heart, how far more exceeding joy must it be, in the midst of all sorrow, to receive from the same sacred hand so many comfortable lines as my good friend Mr. George hath at once brought me! Pardon me, my sweet Lady, if they cause me to forget myself. Only this I do say, with most humble, dutiful thanks, that the scope of all my service hath ever been to content and please you; and if I may do that, then is all sacrifice, either of life or whatsoever, well offered for you."²

The matter of the government absolute having been so fully discussed during the preceding four months, and the last opinions of the state council having been so lucidly expounded in the despatches to be carried by Heneage to England, the matter might be considered as exhausted. Leicester contented himself, therefore, with once more calling her Majesty's attention to the fact

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., pp. 262, 263, May 8 (18), 1586.

² Leicester to the queen, June 14 (24), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

that if he had not himself accepted the office thus conferred upon him by the states, it would have been bestowed upon some other personage. It would hardly have comported with her dignity if Count Maurice of Nassau, or Count William, or Count Meurs, had been appointed governor absolute, for in that case the earl, as general of the auxiliary English force, would have been subject to the authority of the chieftain thus selected. It was impossible, as the state council had very plainly shown, for Leicester to exercise supreme authority while merely holding the military office of her Majesty's lieutenant-general. The authority of governor or stadholder could only be derived from the supreme power of the country. If her Majesty had chosen to accept the sovereignty, as the states had ever desired, the requisite authority could then have been derived from her, as from the original fountain. As she had resolutely refused that offer, however, his authority was necessarily to be drawn from the States-General, or else the queen must content herself with seeing him serve as an English military officer only, subject to the orders of the supreme power, wherever that power might reside. In short, Elizabeth's wish that her general might be clothed with the privileges of her viceroy, while she declined herself to be the sovereign, was illogical, and could not be complied with.¹

Very soon after inditing these last epistles to the provinces, the queen became more reasonable on the subject, and an elaborate communication was soon received by the state council, in which the royal acquiescence was signified to the latest propositions of the states. The various topics suggested in previous de-

¹ Leicester to the queen, MS. last cited.

spatches from Leicester and from the council were reviewed, and the whole subject was suddenly placed in a somewhat different light from that in which it seemed to have been previously regarded by her Majesty. She alluded to the excuse offered by the state council, which had been drawn from the necessity of the case, and from their "great liking for her cousin of Leicester," although in violation of the original contract. "As you acknowledge, however," she said, "that therein you were justly to be blamed, and do crave pardon for the same, we cannot, upon this acknowledgment of your fault, but remove our former dislike."¹

Nevertheless, it would now seem that her "mistake" had proceeded, not from the excess, but from the insufficiency of the powers conferred upon the earl, and she complained, accordingly, that they had given him shadow rather than substance.²

Simultaneously with this royal communication came a joint letter to Leicester, from Burghley, Walsingham, and Hatton, depicting the long and strenuous conflict which they had maintained in his behalf with the rapidly

¹ Queen to council of state, June 16 (26), 1586, S. P. Office MS., much corrected in Burghley's handwriting.

² Ibid. "Yet when we look," she proceeded, "into the little profit that the common cause hath received hitherto by the yielding unto him rather in words and writings a title of a kind of absolute government than any effect of the authority signified by the words of the grant; for that by virtue thereof we understand that he can neither be made thoroughly acquainted with the true state of your affairs there, requisite for such an office as you have given him in name, nor yet receive the due performance of such contributions of money and other necessaries as were specially promised unto him before the acceptation of the government, inasmuch as, for the lack of due satisfaction of the things promised, he hath been enforced to employ part of our treasure—sent over for the payment

varying inclinations of the queen. They expressed a warm sympathy with the difficulties of his position, and spoke in strong terms of the necessity that the Netherlands and England should work heartily together. For otherwise, they said, "the cause will fall, the enemy will rise, and we must stagger." Notwithstanding the secret negotiations with the enemy, which Leicester and Walsingham suspected, and which will be more fully examined in a subsequent chapter, they held a language on that subject which in the secretary's mouth, at least, was sincere. "Whatsoever speeches be blown abroad of parleys of peace," they said, "all will be but smoke; yea, fire will follow."¹

They excused themselves for their previous and enforced silence by the fact that they had been unable to communicate any tidings but messages of distress, but they now congratulated the earl that her Majesty, as he would see by her letter to the council, was firmly resolved not only to countenance his governorship, but to sustain him in the most thorough manner. It would be, therefore, quite out of the question *for them to listen to his earnest propositions to be recalled.*²

of such of our people as by the contract we promised to maintain—to pay and relieve such other forces as were entertained by the states, . . . besides many other like burdens laid upon our cousin, contrary to our expectation; all this doth give us cause to *mistake not so much the title* itself as the lack of performance which the title carries show of—a matter, yea, of things most necessary for your own defense; a matter that, without speedy redress, cannot but breed both imminent peril to those countries and dishonor to us."

¹ Burghley, Hatton, and Walsingham, to Leicester, June 17 (27), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Ibid. "Her Majesty is not only minded," they said, "but, as we perceive, resolutely determined—yea, persuaded fully—that

Moreover, the lord treasurer had already apprised Leicester that Heneage had safely arrived in England, that he had made his report to the queen, and that her Majesty was "very well contented with him and his mission."¹

It may be easily believed that the earl would feel a sensation of relief, if not of triumph, at this termination to the embarrassments under which he had been laboring ever since he listened to the oration of the wise Leoninus upon New Year's day. At last the queen had formally acquiesced in the action of the states and in his acceptance of their offer. He now saw himself undisputed "governor absolute," having been six months long a suspected, discredited, almost disgraced man. It was natural that he should express himself cheerfully.

"My great comfort received, O my most gracious Lady," he said, "by your most favorable lines written by your own sacred hand, I did most humbly acknowledge by my former letter, albeit I can no way make testimony oft enough of the great joy I took thereby. And seeing *my wounded heart is by this means almost made whole*, I do pray unto God that either I may never feel the like again from you, or not be suffered to live, rather than I should fall again into those torments of your displeasure. Most gracious Queen, I beseech you, therefore, make perfect that which you have begun. Let not the common danger, nor any ill incident to the place it is necessary for *your Lordship not only to continue in the government*, but to have it more amply established and perfected to all purposes for your credit and strength, and especially with money and men for maintenance of those countries against the enemy. We should greatly err, therefore, if we should at this time move her Majesty to recall you."

¹ Bruce, 307.

I serve you in, be accompanied with greater troubles and fears indeed than all the horrors of death can bring me. My strong hope doth now so assure me as I have almost won the battle against despair, and I do arm myself with as many of those wonted comfortable conceits as may confirm my new revived spirits, reposing myself evermore under the *shadow of those blessed beams* that must yield the only nourishment to this disease."¹

But however nourishing the shade of those blessed beams might prove to Leicester's disease, it was not so easy to bring about a very sunny condition in the provinces. It was easier for Elizabeth to mend the broken heart of the governor than to repair the damage which had been caused to the commonwealth by her caprice and her deceit. The dispute concerning the government absolute had died away, but the authority of the earl had got a "crack in it" which never could be handsomely made whole.² The states, during the long period of Leicester's discredit, feeling more and more doubtful as to the secret intentions of Elizabeth, disappointed in the condition of the auxiliary troops and in the amount of supplies furnished from England, and, above all, having had time to regret their delegation of a power which they began to find agreeable to exercise with their own hands, became indisposed to intrust the earl with the administration and full inspection of their resources. To the enthusiasm which had greeted the first arrival of Elizabeth's representative had succeeded a jealous, carping, suspicious sentiment. The two hun-

¹ Leicester to the queen, June 20 (30), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² "My credit hath been cracked ever since her Majesty sent Sir Thomas Heneage hither, as all men can tell you."—Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 424, October 2 (12), 1586.

dred thousand florins monthly were paid, according to the original agreement, but the four hundred thousand of extra service-money subsequently voted were withheld, and withheld expressly on account of Heneage's original mission to disgrace the governor.¹

"The late return of Sir Thomas Heneage," said Lord North, "hath put such busses in their heads as they march forward with leaden heels and doubtful hearts."²

In truth, through the discredit cast by the queen upon the earl in this important affair, the supreme authority was forced back into the hands of the states, at the very moment when they had most freely divested themselves of power. After the queen had become more reasonable, it was too late to induce them to part a second time so freely with the immediate control of their own affairs. Leicester had become, to a certain extent, disgraced and disliked by the estates. He thought himself, by the necessity of the case, forced to appeal to the people against their legal representatives, and thus the foundation of a nominally democratic party, in opposition to

¹ ". . . as to the not paying by the states of the two hundred thousand florins a month agreed upon," said Leicester to the queen, "I must needs say that they have paid that two hundred thousand, but that I stand upon of late with them is two hundred thousand more, which they long since agreed upon, and I sent word to your Majesty. And herein, indeed, they have been very slack; but if your Majesty will pardon me to speak the truth of that stay, it grew only upon Sir Thomas Heneage's coming with the message of your displeasure; for from that time till this they have not only sought to hinder the agreement, but to intermeddle wholly again with all things which did appertain to my office. To withstand them—to be plain—I durst not, and they have applied it diligently since to work that conceit into every man's head," etc.—Leicester to the queen, June 14 (24), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² North to Burghley, May 29 (June 8), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

the municipal one, was already laid. Nothing could be more unfortunate at that juncture; for we shall, in future, find the earl in perpetual opposition to the most distinguished statesmen in the provinces—to the very men, indeed, who had been most influential in offering the sovereignty to England, and in placing him in the position which he had so much coveted. No sooner, therefore, had he been confirmed by Elizabeth in that high office than his arrogance broke forth, and the quarrels between himself and the representative body became incessant.

“I stand now in somewhat better terms than I did,” said he; “I was not in case till of late to deal roundly with them, as I have now done. I have established a chamber of finances, against some of their wills, whereby I doubt not to procure great benefit to increase our ability for payments hereafter. The people I find still best devoted to her Majesty, though of late many lewd practices have been used to withdraw their good wills. But it will not be; they still pray God that her Majesty may be their sovereign. She should then see what a contribution they will all bring forth. *But to the states they will never return, which will breed some great mischief, there is such mislike of the states universally.* I would your Lordship had seen the case I had lived in among them these four months, especially after her Majesty’s mislike was found. You would then marvel to see how I have waded, as I have done, through no small obstacles, without help, counsel, or assistance.”¹

Thus the part which he felt at last called upon to enact was that of an aristocratic demagogue, in perpetual conflict with the burgher representative body.

¹ Leicester to Burghley, June 18 (28), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

It is now necessary to lift a corner of the curtain by which some international, or rather interpalatial, intrigues were concealed, as much as possible, even from the piercing eyes of Walsingham. The secretary was, however, quite aware, despite the pains taken to deceive him, of the nature of the plots and of the somewhat ignoble character of the actors concerned in them.

CHAPTER VIII

Forlorn condition of Flanders—Parma's secret negotiations with the queen—Grafigni and Bodman—Their dealings with English counselors—Duplicity of Farnese—Secret offers of the English peace party—Letters and intrigues of De Loo—Drake's victories and their effect—Parma's perplexity and anxiety—He is relieved by the news from England—Queen's secret letters to Parma—His letters and instructions to Bodman—Bodman's secret transactions at Greenwich—Walsingham detects and exposes the plot—The intriguers baffled—Queen's letter to Parma, and his to the king—Unlucky results of the peace intrigues—Unhandsome treatment of Leicester—Indignation of the earl and Walsingham—Secret letter of Parma to Philip—Invasion of England recommended—Details of the project.

ALEXANDER FARNESE and his heroic little army had been left by their sovereign in as destitute a condition as that in which Lord Leicester and his unfortunate "paddy persons" had found themselves since their arrival in the Netherlands. These mortal men were but the weapons to be used and broken in the hands of the two great sovereigns, already pitted against each other in mortal combat. That the distant invisible potentate, the work of whose life was to do his best to destroy all European nationality, all civil and religious freedom, should be careless of the instruments by which his purpose was to be effected, was but natural. It is painful to reflect that the great champion of liberty and of

Protestantism was almost equally indifferent to the welfare of the human creatures enlisted in her cause. Spaniards and Italians, English and Irish, went half naked and half starving through the whole inclement winter, and perished of pestilence in droves, after confronting the less formidable dangers of battle-field and leaguer. Manfully and sympathetically did the Earl of Leicester, while whining in absurd hyperbole over the angry demeanor of his sovereign toward himself, represent the imperative duty of an English government to succor English troops.

Alexander Farnese was equally plain-spoken to a sovereign with whom plain-speaking was a crime. In bold, almost scornful language the prince represented to Philip the sufferings and destitution of the little band of heroes by whom that magnificent military enterprise, the conquest of Antwerp, had just been effected. "God will be weary of working miracles for us," he cried, "and nothing but miracles can save the troops from starving." There was no question of paying them their wages, there was no pretense at keeping them reasonably provided with lodging and clothing, but he asserted the undeniable proposition that they "could not pass their lives without eating,"¹ and he implored his sovereign to send at least money enough to buy the soldiers shoes. To go foodless and barefoot without complaining, on the frozen swamps of Flanders, in January, was more than was to be expected from Spaniards and Italians. The country itself was eaten bare. The obedient provinces had reaped absolute ruin as the reward of their obedience. Bruges, Ghent, and the other cities of Brabant

¹ "No se puede pasar la vida sin comer."—Parma to Philip II., February 28, 1586, Archivo de Simancas MS.

and Flanders, once so opulent and powerful, had become mere dens of thieves and paupers. Agriculture, commerce, manufactures, all were dead. The condition of Antwerp was most tragical. The city, which had been so recently the commercial center of the earth, was reduced to absolute beggary. Its world-wide traffic was abruptly terminated, for the mouth of its great river was controlled by Flushing, and Flushing was in the firm grasp of Sir Philip Sydney, as governor for the English queen. Merchants and bankers, who had lately been possessed of enormous resources, were stripped of all. Such of the industrial classes as could leave the place had wandered away to Holland and England. There was no industry possible, for there was no market for the products of industry. Antwerp was hemmed in by the enemy on every side, surrounded by royal troops in a condition of open mutiny, cut off from the ocean, deprived of daily bread, and yet obliged to contribute out of its poverty to the maintenance of the Spanish soldiers, who were there for its destruction. Its burghers, compelled to furnish four hundred thousand florins as the price of their capitulation, and at least six hundred thousand more¹ for the repairs of the dikes, the destruction of which, too long deferred, had only spread desolation over the country without saving

¹ Parma to Philip II., April 19, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

The contemporary historians of the country do not paint more frightful pictures of the desolation of Antwerp, and of the obedient provinces generally, than those furnished by the Prince of Parma in his secret letters to his sovereign. Compare Bor, ii. 984; Meteren, xiii. 253^{vo}; Hoofd, Vervolgh, 251, et mult. al.

“Grandissima lastima,” said Farnese of Antwerp, “ver perdida tan principal villa, y la navegacion de ribera tan linda y provechosa no solo para el pais mas para todo el mundo.”—MS. before cited.

the city, and over and above all forced to rebuild, at their own expense, that fatal citadel, by which their liberty and lives were to be perpetually endangered, might now regret at leisure that they had not been as steadfast during their siege as had been the heroic inhabitants of Leyden in their time of trial, twelve years before. Obedient Antwerp was, in truth, most forlorn. But there was one consolation for her and for Philip, one bright spot in the else universal gloom. The ecclesiastics assured Parma that, notwithstanding the frightful diminution in the population of the city, they had confessed and absolved more persons that Easter than they had ever done since the commencement of the revolt. Great was Philip's joy in consequence.¹ "You cannot imagine my satisfaction," he wrote, "at the news you give me concerning last Easter."²

With a ruined country, starving and mutinous troops, a bankrupt exchequer, and a desperate and pauper population, Alexander Farnese was not unwilling to gain time by simulated negotiations for peace. It was strange, however, that so sagacious a monarch as the Queen of England should suppose it for her interest to grant at that moment the very delay which was deemed most desirable by her antagonist.

Yet it was not wounded affection alone, nor insulted pride, nor startled parsimony, that had carried the fury of the queen to such a height on the occasion of Leicester's elevation to absolute government. It was, still more, because the step was thought likely to interfere

¹ Letter to Philip II. just cited.

² "No podreys pensar el contento que me ha dado el aviso de la frecuencia que hubo a los sacramentos la pasqua pasada," etc.—Philip II. to Parma, July 5, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

with the progress of those negotiations into which the queen had allowed herself to be drawn.

A certain Grafigni—a Genoese merchant residing much in London and in Antwerp, a meddling, intrusive, and irresponsible kind of individual, whose occupation was gone with the cessation of Flemish trade—had recently made his appearance as a volunteer diplomatist. The principal reason for accepting, or rather for winking at, his services seemed to be the possibility of disavowing him, on both sides, whenever it should be thought advisable. He had a partner or colleague, too, named Bodman, who seemed a not much more creditable negotiator than himself. The chief director of the intrigue was, however, Champagny, brother of Cardinal Granvelle, restored to the king's favor, and disposed to atone by his exuberant loyalty for his heroic patriotism on a former and most memorable occasion.¹ Andrea de Loo, another subordinate politician, was likewise employed at various stages of the negotiation.

It will soon be perceived that the part enacted by Burghley, Hatton, Croft, and other counselors, and even by the queen herself, was not a model of ingenuousness toward the absent Leicester and the States-General. The gentlemen sent at various times to and from the earl and her Majesty's government—Davison, Shirley, Vavasour, Heneage, and the rest—had all expressed themselves in the strongest language concerning the good faith and the friendliness of the lord treasurer and the vice-chamberlain,² but they were not so well informed

¹ In the memorable Antwerp Fury. See *Rise of the Dutch Republic*, vol. iv. part iv. chap. v.

² Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 112, 124, 143, 161, 176, 231. Leicester to Burghley, March 18, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

as they would have been had they seen the private letters of Parma to Philip II.

Walsingham, although kept in the dark as much as it was possible, discovered from time to time the mysterious practices of his political antagonists, and warned the queen of the danger and dishonor she was bringing upon herself.¹ Elizabeth, when thus boldly charged, equivocated and stormed alternately. She authorized Walsingham to communicate the secrets which he had thus surprised to the States-General, and then denied having given any such orders.²

In truth, Walsingham was only intrusted with such portions of the negotiations as he had been able, by his own astuteness, to divine; and as he was very much a friend to the provinces and to Leicester, he never failed to keep them instructed to the best of his ability. It must be confessed, however, that the shuffling and paltering among great men and little men, at that period, forms a somewhat painful subject of contemplation at the present day.

Grafigni, having some merchandise to convey from Antwerp to London, went early in the year to the Prince of Parma, at Brussels, in order to procure a passport.³ They entered into some conversation upon the misery of the country, and particularly concerning the troubles to which the unfortunate merchants had been exposed. Alexander expressed much sympathy with the commercial community, and a strong desire that the ancient

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 231, April 21 (May 1), 1586; 272, May 20 (30), 1586.

² *Ibid.*, 240, April 26 (May 6), 1586; 272, May 20 (30), 1586.

³ Copia del Papel de Agostino Grafigna, anno 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

friendship between his master and the Queen of England might be restored. Grafigni assured the prince, as the result of his own observation in England, that the queen participated in those pacific sentiments. "You are going to England," replied the prince, "and you may say to the ministers of her Majesty that, after my allegiance to my king, I am most favorably and affectionately inclined toward her. If it pleases them that I, *as Alexander Farnese*, should attempt to bring about an accord, and if our commissioners could be assured of a hearing in England, I would take care that everything should be conducted with due regard to the honor and reputation of her Majesty."¹

Grafigni then asked for a written letter of credence. "That cannot be," replied Alexander; "but if you return to me I shall believe your report, and then a proper person can be sent, with authority from the king to treat with her Majesty."²

Grafigni proceeded to England, and had an interview with Lord Cobham. A few days later that nobleman gave the merchant a general assurance that the queen had always felt a strong inclination to maintain firm friendship with the house of Burgundy. Nevertheless, as he proceeded to state, the bad policy of the king's ministers, and the enterprises against her Majesty, had compelled her to provide for her own security and that of her realm by remedies differing in spirit from that good inclination. Being, however, a Christian princess,

¹ Copia del Papel de Agostino Grafigna, MS. just cited: "Che io, como Alessandro Farnese, praticassi a pieo d'accordo con mio Re, y che li nostri commessi fussino sentiti in Inghlaterra, tenerei modo che le cose passeriano con ogni honore y reputazione di S. M^a," etc.

² Ibid.

willing to leave vengeance to the Lord and disposed to avoid bloodshed, she was ready to lend her ear to a negotiation for peace, if it were likely to be a sincere and secure one. Especially she was pleased that his Highness of Parma should act as mediator of such a treaty, as she considered him a most just and honorable prince in all his promises and actions. Her Majesty would accordingly hold herself in readiness to receive the honorable commissioners alluded to, feeling sure that every step taken by his Highness would comport with her honor and safety.¹

At about the same time the other partner in this diplomatic enterprise, William Bodman, communicated to Alexander the result of his observations in England. He stated that Lords Burghley, Buckhurst, and Cobham, Sir Christopher Hatton, and Controller Croft were secretly desirous of peace with Spain, and that they had seized the recent *opportunity of her pique against the Earl of Leicester*² to urge forward these underhand negotiations. Some progress had been made; but as no accredited commissioner arrived from the Prince of Parma, and as Leicester was continually writing earnest letters against peace, the efforts of these counselors had slackened. Bodman found them all, on his arrival, anxious, as he said, "to get their necks out of the matter,"³ declaring everything which had been done to be pure matter of accident, entirely without the con-

¹ Papel de Grafigna, MS. before cited.

² "Algun disgusto contra el Conde de Lester," etc., from a document entitled "Lo que en particular siente Gulielmo Bodeman de las intenciones de Inglaterra, anno 1586," Archivo de Simancas MS.

³ "Sacar el cuello y salirse a fuera."—Ibid.



SIR FRANCIS DRAKE, KT.

From the engraving by W. Holl, after F. Zuccherò's picture in the possession of Lady Elliott Drake.

currence of the queen, and each seeking to outrival the others in the good graces of her Majesty.¹ Grafigni informed Bodman, however, that Lord Cobham was quite to be depended upon in the affair, and would deal with him privately, while Lord Burghley would correspond with Andrea de Loo at Antwerp. Moreover, the servant of Controller Croft would direct Bodman as to his course, and would give him daily instructions.²

Now, it so happened that this servant of Croft, Norris by name, was a papist, a man of bad character, and formerly a spy of the Duke of Anjou.³ "If your Lordship or myself should use such instruments as this," wrote Walsingham to Leicester, "I know we should bear no small reproach; but it is the good hap of hollow and doubtful men to be best thought of."⁴ Bodman thought the lords of the peace faction and their adherents not sufficiently strong to oppose the other party with success. He assured Farnese that almost all the *gentlemen and the common people of England stood ready to risk* their fortunes and to go in person to the field to maintain the cause of the queen and religious liberty, and that the chance of peace was desperate unless something should turn the tide, such as, for example, the defeat of Drake, or an invasion by Philip of Ireland or Scotland.⁵

As it so happened that Drake was just then engaged in a magnificent career of victory, sweeping the Spanish Main and startling the nearest and the most remote

¹ Lo que en particular siente G. Bodeman, etc., Arch. de Sim. MS.

² Ibid.

³ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 231, April 21 (May 1), 1586.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Lo que en particular siente G. Bodeman, etc., MS. last cited.

possessions of the king with English prowess, his defeat was not one of the cards to be relied on by the peace party in the somewhat deceptive game which they had commenced. Yet, strange to say, they used, or attempted to use, those splendid triumphs as if they had been disasters.

Meantime there was an active but very secret correspondence between Lord Cobham, Lord Burghley, Sir James Croft, and various subordinate personages in England, on the one side, and Champagny, President Richardot, La Motte, governor of Gravelines, Andrea de Loo, Grafigni, and other men in the obedient provinces, more or less in Alexander's confidence, on the other side. Each party was desirous of forcing or wheedling the antagonist to show his hand. "You were employed to take soundings off the English coast in the Duke of Norfolk's time," said Cobham to La Motte; "you remember the duke's fate. Nevertheless, her Majesty hates war, and it only depends on the king to have a firm and lasting peace."¹

"You must tell Lord Cobham," said Richardot to La Motte, "that you are not at liberty to go into a correspondence until assured of the intentions of Queen Elizabeth. Her Majesty ought to speak first, in order to make her good will manifest,"² and so on.

"The '*friend*' can confer with you," said Richardot to Champagny; "but his Highness is not to appear to know anything at all about it. The queen must signify her intentions."³

¹ Lord Cobham to Seigneur de la Motte, March 2, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

² Richardot to La Motte, March 23, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

³ Richardot to Champagny, March 24, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

“You answered Champagne correctly,” said Burghley to De Loo, “as to what I said last winter concerning her Majesty’s wishes in regard to a pacification. *The Netherlands must be compelled to return to obedience to the king*, but their ancient privileges are to be maintained. You omitted, however, to say a word about toleration, in the provinces, of the Reformed religion. But I said then, as I say now, that this is a condition indispensable to peace.”¹

This was a somewhat important omission on the part of De Loo, and gives the measure of his conscientiousness or his capacity as a negotiator. Certainly for the lord treasurer of England to offer, on the part of her Majesty, to bring about the reduction of her allies under the yoke which they had thrown off without her assistance, and this without leave asked of them, and with no provision for the great principle of religious liberty, which was the cause of the revolt, was a most flagitious trifling with the honor of Elizabeth and of England. Certainly the more this mysterious correspondence is examined, the more conclusive is the justification of the vague and instinctive jealousy felt by Leicester and the States-General as to English diplomacy during the winter and spring of 1586.

Burghley summoned De Loo, accordingly, to recall to his memory all that had been privately said to him on the necessity of protecting the Reformed religion in the provinces. If a peace were to be perpetual, toleration was indispensable, he observed, and her Majesty was said to desire this condition most earnestly.²

¹ Lettera del Sr. Gran Thesoriero d’Inghlaterra a Andrea de Loo, verbatim translata dalla sua lingua in questra, March 6, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

² Ibid.

The lord treasurer also made the not unreasonable suggestion that, in case of a pacification, it would be necessary to provide that English subjects—peaceful traders, mariners, and the like—should no longer be shut up in the Inquisition prisons of Spain and Portugal, and there starved to death, as, with great multitudes, had already been the case.¹

Meantime Alexander, while encouraging and directing all these underhand measures, was carefully impressing upon his master that he was not in the least degree bound by any such negotiations. “Queen Elizabeth,” he correctly observed to Philip, “is a woman; she is also by no means fond of expense. The kingdom, accustomed to repose, is already weary of war; therefore they are all pacifically inclined.”² “It has been intimated to me,” he said, “that if I would send a properly qualified person who should declare that your Majesty had not absolutely forbidden the coming of Lord Leicester, such an agent would be well received, and perhaps *the earl would be recalled.*”³ Alexander then proceeded, with the coolness befitting a trusted governor of Philip II., to comment upon the course which he was pursuing. He could at any time denounce the negotiations which he was secretly prompting. Meantime immense advantages could be obtained by the deception practised upon an enemy whose own object was to deceive.

The deliberate treachery of the scheme was cynically enlarged upon, and its possible results mathematically

¹ Lettera, etc., just cited.

² “La reyna, por ser muger, y sentir el gasto que la combiene hacer, y cansarse aquel Reyno acostumbrado a su reposo,” etc.—Parma to Philip II., March 30, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

³ Ibid.

calculated. Philip was to proceed with the invasion while Alexander was going on with the negotiation. If, meanwhile, they could receive back Holland and Zealand from the hands of England, that would be an immense success.¹ The prince intimated a doubt, however, as to so fortunate a result, because, in dealing with heretics and persons of similar quality, nothing but trickery was to be expected. The chief good to be hoped for was to "chill the queen in her plots, leagues, and alliances, and during the chill to carry forward their own great design."² To slacken not a whit in their preparations, to "put the queen to sleep,"³ and, *above all, not to leave the French for a moment unoccupied with internal dissensions and civil war*—such was the game of the king and the governor, as expounded between themselves.⁴

President Richardot, at the same time, stated to Cardinal Granvelle that the English desire for peace was considered certain at Brussels. Grafigni had informed the Prince of Parma and his counselors that the queen was most amicably disposed, and that there would be no trouble on the point of religion, her Majesty not wishing to obtain more than she would herself be willing to grant. "In this," said Richardot, "there is both hard and soft";⁵ for knowing that the Spanish game was deception, pure and simple, the excellent president could not bring himself to suspect a possible grain of

¹ Parma to Philip II., MS. last cited.

² "Que haya de serbir mas para enfriarla en sus tramas, ligas, y adherencias," etc.—Ibid.

³ "Para adormecerla."—Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ "En cecy il y a du dur y du mol."—Richardot to Granvelle, March 30, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

good faith in the English intentions. Much anxiety was perpetually felt in the French quarter, her Majesty's government being supposed to be secretly preparing an invasion of the obedient Netherlands across the French frontier, in combination, not with the Béarnese, but with Henry III. So much in the dark were even the most astute politicians. "I can't feel satisfied in this French matter," said the president; "we must n't tickle ourselves to make ourselves laugh."¹ Moreover, there was no self-deception nor self-tickling possible as to the unmitigated misery of the obedient Netherlands. Famine was a more formidable foe than Frenchmen, Hollanders, and Englishmen combined, so that Richardot avowed that the "negotiation would be indeed holy" if it would restore Holland and Zealand to the king without fighting. The prospect seemed on the whole rather dismal to loyal Netherlanders like the old leaguering, intriguing, Hispaniolized president of the privy council. "I confess," said he, plaintively, "that England needs chastisement; but I don't see how we are to give it to her. Only let us secure Holland and Zealand, and then we shall always find a stick whenever we like to beat the dog."²

Meantime Andrea de Loo had been bustling and buzzing about the ears of the chief counselors at the English court during all the early spring. Most busily he had been endeavoring to efface the prevalent suspicion

¹ "Il ne faut pas que nous nous chatouillons pour nous faire rire."—Richardot to Granvelle, MS. just cited. Neither Richardot nor Parma himself could then foresee that within two months Henry III. would be proposing to Philip II. a joint invasion of England.

² "Et nous sera aysé de trouver le baston quand nous voulons battre le chien."—Ibid.

that Philip and Alexander were only trifling by these informal negotiations. We have just seen whether or not there was ground for that suspicion. De Loo, being importunate, however,—“as he usually was,” according to his own statement,—obtained in Burghley’s hand a confirmation, by order of the queen, of De Loo’s letter of the 26th December. The matter of religion gave the worthy merchant much difficulty, and he begged Lord Buckhurst, the lord treasurer, and many other counselors not to allow this point of toleration to ruin the whole affair; “for,” said he, “his Majesty will never permit any exercise of the Reformed religion.”¹

At last Buckhurst sent for him, and in presence of Controller Croft gave him information that he had brought the queen to this conclusion: firstly, that she would be satisfied with as great a proportion of religious toleration for Holland, Zealand, and the other United Provinces as his Majesty could concede with safety to his conscience and his honor; ² secondly, that she required an act of amnesty; thirdly, that she claimed reimbursement by Philip for the money advanced by her to the states.³

Certainly a more wonderful claim was never made than this—a demand upon an absolute monarch for indemnity for expenses incurred in fomenting a rebellion of his own subjects. The measure of toleration

¹ Memorial d’Andrea de Loo del negotiato alla corte d’Inghilterra nel mese di Febrero e Marzo, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

² “Imprimis, che S. M^a si contenta di non estar altrimenti sul punto della religione che d’ottenere dal Re quella tanta tolerantia per la Hollanda y la Zelanda con le altre provincie unite, che potra concedere con sua salva coscienza et honore.”—Ibid.

³ Ibid.

proposed for the provinces—the conscience, namely, of the greatest bigot ever born into the world—was likely to prove as satisfactory as the claim for damages propounded by the most parsimonious sovereign in Christendom. It was, however, stipulated that the non-conformists of Holland and Zealand who should be forced into exile were to have their property administered by papist trustees, and, further, that the Spanish Inquisition was not to be established in the Netherlands.¹ Philip could hardly demand better terms than these last after a career of victory. That they should be offered now by Elizabeth was hardly compatible with good faith to the states.

On account of Lord Burghley's gout, it was suggested that the negotiators had better meet in England, as it would be necessary for him to take the lead in the matter, and as he was but an indifferent traveler. Thus, according to De Loo, the queen was willing to hand over the United Provinces to Philip, and to toss religious toleration to the winds, if she could only get back the seventy thousand pounds more or less which she had invested in an unpromising speculation. A few weeks later, and at almost the very moment when Elizabeth had so suddenly overturned her last vial of wrath upon the discomfited Heneage for having communicated, according to her express command, the fact of the pending negotiations to the Netherland states, at that very instant Parma was writing secretly, and in cipher, to Philip. His communication, could Sir Thomas have read it, might have partly explained her Majesty's rage.

Parma had heard, he said, through Bodman, from Controller Croft, that the queen would willingly re-

¹ Memorial d'Andrea de Loo, etc., MS. before cited.

ceive a proper envoy. It was very easy to see, he observed, that the English counselors were seeking every means of entering into communication with Spain, and that they were doing so with the participation of the queen.¹ Lord Treasurer Burghley and Controller Croft had expressed surprise that the prince had not yet sent a secret agent to her Majesty, under pretext of demanding explanations concerning Lord Leicester's presence in the provinces, but in reality to treat for peace. Such an agent, it had been intimated, would be well received.² The lord treasurer and the controller would do all in their power to advance the negotiation, so that, with their aid and with the pacific inclination of the queen, the measures proposed in favor of Leicester would be suspended, and perhaps the earl himself and all the English would be recalled.³

The queen was further represented as taking great pains to excuse both the expedition of Sir Francis Drake to the Indies, and the mission of Leicester to the provinces. She was said to throw the whole blame of these enterprises upon Walsingham and other ill-intentioned personages, and to avow that she now understood matters better, so that, if Parma would at once send an envoy, peace would, without question, soon be made.⁴

Parma had expressed his gratification at these hopeful

¹ "Bien claro echa de ver que van buscando todos los que les parecen a proposito para entrar en comunicacion, y que lo hazen con la participacion de la Reyna."—Parma to Philip II., April 19, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

² Ibid.

³ "Y con esto y la inclinacion que tiene la Reyna á la paz, se suspenderian las proposiciones que se hazen en favor del Conde de Lestre, y quiza seria revocado el con todos los Ingleses."—Ibid.

⁴ "Esmerando se mucho en excusar la Reyna assi de la yda de Drake a las Indias como de la venida de Leicester, echando la

dispositions on the part of Burghley and Croft, and held out hopes of sending an agent to treat with them, if not directly with her Majesty. For some time past, according to the prince, the English government had not seemed to be honestly seconding the Earl of Leicester, nor to correspond with his desires. "This makes me think," he said, "that the counselors before mentioned, being his rivals, are trying to trip him up."¹

In such a caballing, prevaricating age it is difficult to know which of all the plotters and counterplotters engaged in these intrigues could accomplish the greatest amount of what, for the sake of diluting in nine syllables that which could be more forcibly expressed in one, was then called diplomatic dissimulation. It is to be feared, notwithstanding her frequent and vociferous denials, that the robes of the "imperial votaress" were not so unsullied as could be wished. We know how loudly Leicester had complained; we have seen how clearly Walsingham could convict: but Elizabeth, though convicted, could always confute; for an absolute sovereign, even without resorting to Philip's syllogisms of ax and fagot, was apt in the sixteenth century to have the best of an argument with private individuals.

The secret statements of Parma, made, not for public effect, but for the purpose of furnishing his master with the most accurate information he could gather as to English policy, are certainly entitled to considera-

culpa a Walsingham y a otros mal intencionados, y que ya la Reyna comenzava a conocerlo," etc.—Parma to Philip II., MS. last cited.

"Que estos, como sus contrarios, deven de yrle a la mano," etc.—Ibid.

tion. They were doubtless founded upon the statements of individuals rejoicing in no very elevated character; but those individuals had no motive to deceive their patron. If they clashed with the vehement declarations of very eminent personages, it must be admitted, on the other hand, that they were singularly in accordance with the silent eloquence of important and mysterious events.

As to Alexander Farnese, without deciding the question whether Elizabeth and Burghley were deceiving Walsingham and Leicester, or only trying to delude Philip and himself, he had no hesitation, of course, on his part, in recommending to Philip the employment of unlimited dissimulation. Nothing could be more ingenuous than the intercourse between the king and his confidential advisers. It was perfectly understood among them that they were always to deceive every one, upon every occasion. Only let them be false, and it was impossible to be wholly wrong; but grave mistakes might occur from occasional deviations into sincerity. It was no question at all, therefore, that it was Parma's duty to delude Elizabeth and Burghley. Alexander's course was plain. He informed his master that he would keep these difficulties alive as much as it was possible. In order to "put them all to sleep with regard to the great enterprise of the invasion,"¹ he would send back Bodman to Burghley and Croft, and thus keep this unofficial negotiation upon its legs. The king was quite uncommitted, and could always disavow what had been done. Meanwhile he was gaining, and his adversaries losing, much precious time. "If by this

¹ "Per endormecerlos por lo que toca al negocio principal."
—Parma to Philip II., MS. last cited.

course," said Parma, "we can induce the English to hand over to us the places which they hold in Holland and Zealand, that will be a great triumph." Accordingly, he urged the king not to slacken in the least his preparations for invasion, and, above all, to have a care that the French were kept entangled and embarrassed among themselves, which was a most substantial point.¹

Meantime Europe was ringing with the American successes of the bold corsair Drake. San Domingo, Porto Rico, Santiago, Cartagena, Florida, were sacked and destroyed, and the supplies drawn so steadily from the oppression of the Western world to maintain Spanish tyranny in Europe were for a time extinguished. Parma was appalled at these triumphs of the sea-king—"a fearful man to the King of Spain,"² as Lord Burghley well observed. The Spanish troops were starving in Flanders, all Flanders itself was starving, and Philip, as usual, had sent but insignificant remittances to save his perishing soldiers. Parma had already exhausted his credit. Money was most difficult to obtain in such a forlorn country, and now the few rich merchants and bankers of Antwerp that were left looked very black at these crushing news from America. "They are drawing their purse-strings very tight," said Alexander, "and will make no accommodation. The most contemplative of them ponder much over this success of Drake, and think that your Majesty will forget our matters here altogether."³ For this reason he informed the king that it would be advisable to drop all

¹ "Que los franceses se entretengan embaraçados entre se, que es punto sustancialissimo."—Parma to Philip II., MS. last cited.

² Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 199, March 31 (April 10), 1586.

³ Parma to Philip II., May 9, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

further negotiation with England for the time, as it was hardly probable that, with such advantages gained by the queen, she would be inclined to proceed in the path which had been just secretly opened.¹ Moreover, the prince was in a state of alarm as to the intentions of France. Mendoza and Tassis had given him to understand that a very good feeling prevailed between the court of Henry and of Elizabeth, and that the French were likely to come to a pacification among themselves.² In this the Spanish envoys were hardly anticipating so great an effect as we have seen that they had the right to do from their own indefatigable exertions; for, thanks to their zeal, backed by the moderate subsidies furnished by their master, the civil war in France already seemed likely to be as enduring as that of the Netherlands. But Parma, still quite in the dark as to French politics, was haunted by the vision of seventy thousand foot and six thousand horse³ ready to be let slip upon him at any moment out of a pacified and harmonious France, while he had nothing but a few starving and crippled regiments to withstand such an invasion. When all these events should have taken place, and France, in alliance with England, should have formally declared war against Spain, Alexander protested that he should have learned nothing new.⁴

The prince was somewhat mistaken as to political affairs; but his doubts concerning his neighbors, blended with the forlorn condition of himself and army, about which there was no doubt at all, showed the exigencies of his situation. In the midst of such embarrassments it is impossible not to admire his heroism as a military

¹ Parma to Philip II., MS. just cited.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

chieftain and his singular adroitness as a diplomatist. He had painted for his sovereign a most faithful and horrible portrait of the obedient provinces. The soil was untilled; the manufactories had all stopped; trade had ceased to exist. It was a pity only to look upon the raggedness of his soldiers. No language could describe the misery of the reconciled provinces—Artois, Hainault, Flanders. The condition of Bruges would melt the hardest heart; other cities were no better; Antwerp was utterly ruined, its inhabitants were all starving. The famine throughout the obedient Netherlands was such as had not been known for a century. The whole country had been picked bare by the troops, and the plow was not put into the ground. Deputations were constantly with him from Bruges, Dendermonde, Bois-le-Duc, Brussels, Antwerp, Nimwegen, proving to him by the most palpable evidence that the whole population of those cities had almost literally nothing to eat. He had nothing, however, but exhortations to patience to feed them withal. He was left without a groat even to save his soldiers from starving, and he wildly and bitterly, day after day, implored his sovereign for aid.¹ These pictures are not the sketches of a historian striving for effect, but literal transcripts from the most secret revelations of the prince himself to his sovereign. On the other hand, although Leicester's complaints of the destitution of the English troops in the Republic were almost as bitter, yet the condition of the United Provinces was comparatively healthy. Trade, external and internal, was increasing daily. Distant commercial and military expeditions were fitted out,

¹ Letters of Parma to Philip II., April 19, 1586, May 9, 1586, May 27, 1586, et al., Arch. de Sim. MSS.

manufactures were prosperous, and the war of independence was gradually becoming, strange to say, a source of prosperity to the new commonwealth.

Philip, being now less alarmed than his nephew concerning French affairs, and not feeling so keenly the misery of the obedient provinces or the wants of the Spanish army, sent to Alexander six hundred thousand ducats by way of Genoa. In the letter submitted by his secretary recording this remittance, the king made, however, a characteristic marginal note: "See if it will not be as well to tell him something concerning the two hundred thousand ducats to be deducted for Mucio, for fear of more mischief if the prince should expect the whole six hundred thousand."¹

Accordingly, Mucio got the two hundred thousand. One third of the meager supply destined for the relief of the king's starving and valiant little army in the Netherlands was cut off to go into the pockets of the intriguing Duke of Guise. "We must keep the French," said Philip, "in a state of confusion at home, and feed their civil war. We must not allow them to come to a general peace, which would be destruction for the Catholics. I know you will put a good face on the matter, and, after all, 't is in the interest of the Netherlands. Moreover, the money shall be immediately refunded."²

Alexander was more likely to make a wry face, not-

¹ "Mirad si es bien decirle algo de los 200^m ducados para Mucio, en caso que sean menester—porque despues no se haga mas de mal, esperando todos 600^m."—Philip II. to Parma, May 14, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

² "Sustentando los franceses el ruido en su casa, y no les dejando conseguir la paz general, que no ha de ser sino destruccion de los Catholicos," etc.—Ibid.

withstanding his views of the necessity of fomenting the rebellion against the house of Valois. Certainly if a monarch intended to conquer such countries as France, England, and Holland without stirring from his easy-chair in the Escorial, it would have been at least as well, so Alexander thought, to invest a little more capital in the speculation. No monarch ever dreamed of arriving at universal empire with less personal fatigue or exposure, or at a cheaper rate, than did Philip II. His only fatigue was at his writing-table. But even here his merit was of a subordinate description. He sat a great while at a time,—he had a genius for sitting,—but he now wrote few letters himself. A dozen words or so, scrawled in hieroglyphics at the top, bottom, or along the margin of the interminable despatches of his secretaries, contained the suggestions, more or less luminous, which arose in his mind concerning public affairs. But he held firmly to his purpose. He had devoted his life to the extermination of Protestantism, to the conquest of France and England, to the subjugation of Holland. These were vast schemes. A king who should succeed in such enterprises, by his personal courage and genius, at the head of his armies, or by consummate diplomacy, or by a masterly system of finance, husbanding and concentrating the resources of his almost boundless realms, might be in truth commended for capacity. Hitherto, however, Philip's triumph had seemed problematical, and perhaps something more would be necessary than letters to Parma and paltry remittances to Mucio, notwithstanding Alexander's splendid but local victories in Flanders.

Parma, although in reality almost at bay, concealed his despair, and accomplished wonders in the field. The

military events during the spring and summer of 1586 will be sketched in a subsequent chapter. For the present it is necessary to combine into a complete whole the subterranean negotiations between Brussels and England.

Much to his surprise and gratification, Parma found that the peace party were not inclined to change their views in consequence of the triumphs of Drake. He soon informed the king that, according to Champagny and Bodman, the lord treasurer, the controller, Lord Cobham, and Sir Christopher Hatton were more pacific than they had ever been. These four were represented by Grafigni as secretly in league against Leicester and Walsingham, and very anxious to bring about a reconciliation between the crowns of England and Spain.¹ The merchant-diplomatist, according to his own statement, was expressly sent by Queen Elizabeth to the Prince of Parma, although without letter of credence or signed instructions, but with the full knowledge and approbation of the four counselors just mentioned. He assured Alexander that the queen and the majority of her council felt a strong desire for peace and had *manifested much repentance for what had been done*.² They had explained their proceedings by the necessity of self-defense. They had avowed, in case they should be made sure of peace, that they should, not with reluctance and against their will, but, on the contrary, with the utmost alacrity and at once, surrender to the King of Spain the territory which they possessed

¹ Parma to Philip II., June 11, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

² "La inclinacion y deseo que tiene la Reyna y la mayor parte de su consejo de la paz, y de acomodarse con V. M., y del *arrepentimiento que muestran de lo hecho*."—Ibid.

in the Netherlands, and especially the fortified towns in Holland and Zealand,¹ for the English object had never been conquest. Parma had also been informed of the queen's strong desire that he should be employed as negotiator, on account of her great confidence in his sincerity. They had expressed much satisfaction on hearing that he was about to send an agent to England, and had protested themselves rejoiced at Drake's triumphs only because of their hope that a peace with Spain would thus be rendered the easier of accomplishment. They were much afraid, according to Grafigni, of Philip's power, and dreaded a Spanish invasion of their country, in conjunction with the pope. They were now extremely anxious that Parma, as he himself informed the king, should send an agent of good capacity, in great secrecy, to England. The controller had said that he had pledged himself to such a result, and if it failed, that they would probably cut off his head.² The four counselors were excessively solicitous for the negotiation, and each of them was expecting to gain favor by advancing it to the best of his ability.

Parma hinted at the possibility that all these professions were false, and that the English were only intending to keep the king from the contemplated invasion. At the same time he drew Philip's attention to *the fact that Burghley and his party had most evidently been doing everything in their power to obstruct Leicester's progress in the Netherlands and to keep back the reinforcements of troops and money which he so much required.*³

¹ "Antes, se allanaran en volver y entregar a V. Ma lo que ocupan y poseen y en particular las fuerzas de Holanda y Zeeland," etc.—Parma to Philip II., MS. just cited.

² "Que le corten la cabeza."—Ibid,

³ Ibid.

No doubt these communications of Parma to the king were made upon the faith of an agent not over-scrupulous, and of no elevated or recognized rank in diplomacy. It must be borne in mind, however, that he had been made use of by both parties, perhaps because it would be easy to throw off and discredit him whenever such a step should be convenient; and that, on the other hand, coming fresh from Burghley and the rest into the presence of the keen-eyed Farnese, he would hardly invent for his employer a budget of falsehoods. That man must have been a subtle negotiator who could outwit such a statesman as Burghley and the other counselors of Elizabeth, and a bold one who could dare to trifle on a momentous occasion with Alexander of Parma.

Leicester thought Burghley very much his friend, and so thought Davison and Heneage; and the lord treasurer had, in truth, stood stoutly by the earl in the affair of the absolute governorship—"a matter more severe and cumbersome to him and others," said Burghley, "than any whatsoever since he was a counselor."¹ But there is no doubt that these negotiations were going forward all the spring and summer, that they were most detrimental to Leicester's success, and that they were kept, so far as it was possible, a profound secret from him, from Walsingham, and from the States-General. Nothing was told them except what their own astuteness had discovered beforehand; and the game of the counselors, so far as their attitude toward Leicester and Walsingham was concerned, seems both disingenuous and impolitic.

Parma, it was to be feared, was more than a match for the English governor-general in the field; and it was

¹ Leyc. Corresp., 268, May 13 (23), 1586.

certainly hopeless for poor old Controller Croft, even though backed by the sagacious Burghley, to accomplish so great an amount of dissimulation in a year as the Spanish cabinet, without effort, could compass in a week. Nor were they attempting to do so. It is probable that England was acting toward Philip in much better faith than he deserved, or than Parma believed; but it is hardly to be wondered at that Leicester should think himself injured by being kept perpetually in the dark.

Elizabeth was very impatient at not receiving direct letters from Parma, and her anxiety on the subject explains much of her caprice during the quarrel about the governor-generalship. Many persons in the Netherlands thought those violent scenes a farce, and a farce that had been arranged with Leicester beforehand. In this they were mistaken, for an examination of the secret correspondence of the period reveals the motives, which to contemporaries were hidden, of many strange transactions. The queen was, no doubt, extremely anxious, and with cause, at the tempest slowly gathering over her head; but the more the dangers thickened, the more was her own official language to those in high places befitting the sovereign of England.

She expressed her surprise to Farnese that he had not written to her on the subject of the Grafigni and Bodman affair. The first, she said, was justified in all which he had narrated, save in his assertion that she had sent him. The other had not obtained audience, because he had not come provided with any credentials, direct or indirect. Having now understood from Andrea de Loo and the Seigneur de Champagny that Parma had the power to conclude a peace, which he seemed very

much to desire, she observed that it was not necessary for him to be so chary in explaining the basis of the proposed negotiations. It was better to enter into a straightforward path than by ambiguous words to spin out to great length matters which princes should at once conclude.¹

“Do not suppose,” said the queen, “that I am seeking what belongs to others. God forbid. I seek only that which is mine own. But be sure that I will take good heed of the sword which threatens me with destruction, nor think that I am so craven-spirited as to endure a wrong or to place myself at the mercy of my enemy. Every week I see advertisements and letters from Spain that this year shall witness the downfall of England; for the Spaniards—like the hunter who divided, with great liberality, among his friends the body and limbs of the wolf before it had been killed—have partitioned this kingdom and that of Ireland before the conquest has been effected. But my royal heart is no whit appalled by such threats.² I trust, with the help of the divine hand, which has thus far miraculously preserved me, to smite all these braggart powers into the dust, and to preserve my honor and the kingdoms which he has given me for my heritage.

“Nevertheless, if you have authority to enter upon and to conclude this negotiation, you will find my ears open to hear your propositions; and I tell you further, if a peace is to be made, that I wish you to be the mediator thereof. Such is the affection I bear you, notwith-

¹ Queen Elizabeth to Prince of Parma, without date, Arch. de Sim. MS.

² “Non resta che 'l mi curore regale sia punto sbigottito do queste minaccie,” etc.—Ibid.

standing that some letters written by your own hand might easily have effaced such sentiments from my mind.”¹

Soon afterward Bodman was again despatched to England, Grafigni being already there. He was provided with unsigned instructions, according to which he was to say that the prince, having heard of the queen's good intentions, had despatched him and Grafigni to her court. They were to listen to any suggestions made by the queen to her ministers, but they were to do nothing but listen. If the counselors should enter into their grievances against his Majesty and ask for explanations, the agents were to say that they had no authority or instructions to speak for so great and Christian a monarch. Thus they were to cut the thread of any such discourse, or any other observations not to the purpose.²

Silence, in short, was recommended, first and last, as the one great business of their mission, and it was unlucky that men whose talent for taciturnity was thus signally relied upon should be somewhat remarkable for loquacity. Grafigni was also the bearer of a letter from Alexander to the queen, of which Bodman received a copy; but it was strictly enjoined upon them to keep the letter, their instructions, and the objects of their journey a secret from all the world.³

The letter of the prince consisted mainly of complimentary flourishes. He had heard, he said, all that

¹ Queen Elizabeth to Prince of Parma, MS. just cited.

² Instruzione embiada á Gulielmo Bodeman, June 20, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.: “Cortando el hilo a la platica y discursos como a todos los demas que no hacen a proposito,” etc.

³ Ibid.

Agostino Grafigni had communicated, and he now begged her Majesty to let him understand the course which it was proper to take; assuring her of his gratitude for her good opinion touching his sincerity, and his desire to save the effusion of blood, and so on, concluding, of course, with expressions of most profound consideration and devotion.¹

Early in July Bodman arrived in London. He found Grafigni in very low spirits. He had been with Lord Cobham, and was much disappointed with his reception; for Cobham, angry that Grafigni had brought no commission from the king, had refused to receive Parma's letter to the queen, and had expressed annoyance that Bodman should be employed on this mission, having heard that he was very ill-tempered and passionate. The same evening he had been sent for by Lord Burghley, who had accepted the letter for her Majesty without saying a word, and on the following morning he had been taken to task by several counselors on the ground that the prince, in that communication, had stated that the queen had expressed a desire for peace.²

It has just been shown that there was no such intimation at all in the letter; but as neither Grafigni nor Bodman had read the epistle itself, but only the copy furnished them, they could merely say that such an assertion, if made by the prince, had been founded on no statement of theirs. Bodman consoled his colleague, as well as he could, by assurances that when the letter was fairly produced their vindication would be complete, and Grafigni, upon that point, was comforted. He was,

¹ Parma to Queen Elizabeth, June 20, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

² Relacion de lo sucedido en Inglaterra a G. Bodeman con los señores de aquel consejo, etc., July 30, 1586.

however, very doleful in general, and complained bitterly of Burghley and the other English counselors. He said that they had forced him, against his will, to make this journey to Brussels, that they had offered him presents, that they would leave him no rest in his own house, but had made him neglect all his private business, and caused him a great loss of time and money, in order that he might serve them. They had manifested the strongest desire that Parma should open this communication, and had led him to expect a very large recompense for his share in the transaction. "And now," said Grafigni to his colleague, with great bitterness, "I find no faith nor honor in them at all. They don't keep their word, and every one of them is trying to slide out of the very business in which each was, but the other day, striving to outrival the other, in order that it might be brought to a satisfactory conclusion."¹

After exploding in this way to Bodman, he went back to Cobham, and protested, with angry vehemence, that Parma had never written such a word to the queen, and that so it would prove if the letter were produced.

Next day Bodman was sent for to Greenwich, where her Majesty was, as usual, residing. A secret pavilion was indicated to him, where he was to stay until sunset. When that time arrived, Lord Cobham's secretary came with great mystery, and begged the emissary to follow him, but at a considerable distance, toward the apartments of Lord Burghley in the palace. Arriving there,

¹ Relacion de lo sucedido, etc., MS. last cited. "No hallaba fé, palabra, ni honra entre ellos, porque cada uno queria salirse afuera que de antes estribaban quien primero lo podria acabar."—Ibid.

they found the lord treasurer, accompanied by Cobham and Croft. Burghley instantly opened the interview by a defense of the queen's policy in sending troops to the Netherlands and in espousing their cause, and then the conversation proceeded to the immediate matter in hand.¹

BODMAN (after listening respectfully to the lord treasurer's observations): "His Highness has, however, been extremely surprised that my Lord Leicester should take an oath as governor-general of the king's provinces. He is shocked likewise by the great demonstrations of hostility on the part of her Majesty."

BURGHLEY: "The oath was indispensable. The queen was obliged to tolerate the step on account of the great urgency of the states to have a head. But her Majesty has commanded us to meet you on this occasion in order to hear what you have to communicate on the part of the Prince of Parma."

BODMAN (after a profusion of complimentary phrases): "I have no commission to say anything. I am only instructed to listen to anything that may be said to me, and that her Majesty may be pleased to command."

BURGHLEY: "'T is very discreet to begin thus. But time is pressing, and it is necessary to be brief. We beg you therefore to communicate, without further preface, that which you have been charged to say."

BODMAN: "I can only repeat to your Lordship that I have been charged to say nothing."

After this Barmecide feast of diplomacy, to partake of which it seemed hardly necessary that the guests should have previously attired themselves in such garments of mystery, the parties separated for the night.²

¹ Relacion de lo sucedido, etc., Arch. de Sim. MS. last cited.

² Ibid.

In spite of their care, it would seem that the Argus-eyed Walsingham had been able to see after sunset; for the next evening, after Bodman had been introduced with the same precautions to the same company in the same place, Burghley, before a word had been spoken, sent for Sir Francis.¹

Bodman was profoundly astonished, for he had been expressly informed that Walsingham was to know nothing of the transaction.² The secretary of state could not so easily be outwitted, however, and he was soon seated at the table, surveying the scene with his grave, melancholy eyes, which had looked quite through the whole paltry intrigue.

BURGHLEY: "Her Majesty has commanded us to assemble together, in order that, in my presence, it may be made clear that she did not commence this negotiation. Let Grafigni be summoned."

Grafigni immediately made his appearance.

BURGHLEY: "You will please to explain how you came to enter into this business."

GRAFIGNI: "The first time I went to the states, it was on my private affairs; I had no order from any one to treat with the Prince of Parma. His Highness, having accidentally heard, however, that I resided in England, expressed a wish to see me. I had an interview with the prince. I told him, out of my own head, that the queen had a strong inclination to hear propositions of peace, and that, as some of her counselors were of the same opinion, I believed that if his Highness should send a negotiator some good would be effected. The prince replied that he felt by no means sure of such a

¹ Relacion de lo sucedido, etc., MS. last cited.

² Ibid.

result, but that, if I should come back from England, sent by the queen or her council, he would then despatch a person with a commission to treat of peace. This statement, together with other matters that had passed between us, was afterward drawn up in writing by command of his Highness."

BURGHLEY: "Who bade you say, after your second return to Brussels, that you came on the part of the queen? For you well know that her Majesty did not send you."

GRAFIGNI: "I never said so. I stated that my Lord Cobham had set down in writing what I was to say to the Prince of Parma. It will never appear that I represented the queen as desiring peace. I said that her Majesty *would lend her ears to peace*. Bodman knows this, too, and he has a copy of the letter of his Highness."

WALSINGHAM (to Bodman): "Have you the copy still?"

BODMAN: "Yes, Mr. Secretary."

WALSINGHAM: "Please to produce it, in order that this matter may be sifted to the bottom."

BODMAN: "I supplicate your Lordships to pardon me, but indeed that cannot be. My instructions forbid my showing the letter."

WALSINGHAM (rising): "I will forthwith go to her Majesty and fetch the original." A pause. Mr. Secretary returns in a few minutes, having obtained the document, which the queen, up to that time, had kept by her, without showing it to any one.¹

WALSINGHAM (after reading the letter attentively and aloud): "There is not such a word as that her Majesty is desirous of peace in the whole paper."²

¹ Relacion de lo sucedido, etc., MS. before cited.

² Ibid. Compare Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 321, June 24 (July 4), 1586; and 327, June 30 (July 10), 1586.

BURGHLEY (taking the letter, and slowly construing it out of Italian into English): "It would seem that his Highness hath written this, assuming that the Signor Grafigni came from the queen, although he had received his instructions from my Lord Cobham. It is plain, however, that the negotiation was commenced accidentally."

CONTROLLER CROFT (nervously, and with the air of a man fearful of getting into trouble): "You know very well, Mr. Bodman, that my servant came to Dunkirk only to buy and truck away horses, and that you then, by chance, entered into talk with him about the best means of procuring a peace between the two kingdoms. My servant told you of the good feeling that prevailed in England. You promised to write on the subject to the prince, and I immediately informed the lord treasurer of the whole transaction."¹

BURGHLEY: "That is quite true."

CROFT: "My servant subsequently returned to the provinces in order to learn what the prince might have said on the subject."

BODMAN (with immense politeness,² but very decidedly): "Pardon me, Mr. Controller, but in this matter I must speak the truth, even if the honor and life of my father were on the issue. I declare that your servant Norris came to me, directly commissioned for that purpose by yourself, and informed me from you, and upon your authority, that if I would solicit the Prince of Parma to send a secret agent to England a peace would be at once negotiated. Your servant entreated me to go to his Highness at Brussels. I refused,

¹ Relacion, etc., MS.

² "Con buena crianza," etc.—Ibid.

but agreed to consider the proposition. After the lapse of several days the servant returned to make further inquiries. I told him that the prince had come to no decision. Norris continued to press the matter. I excused myself. He then solicited and obtained from me a letter of introduction to De Loo, the secretary of his Highness. Armed with this, he went to Brussels and had an interview—as I found, four days later—with the prince. In consequence of the representations of Norris, those of Signor Grafigni, and those by way of Antwerp, his Highness determined to send me to England.”

BURGHLEY (to Croft): “Did you order your servant to speak with Andrea de Loo?”

CROFT: “I cannot deny it.”

BURGHLEY: “The fellow¹ seems to have traveled a good way out of his commission. His master sends him to buy horses, and he commences a peace negotiation between two kingdoms. It would be well he were chastised. As regards the Antwerp matter, too, we have had many letters, and I have seen one from the Seigneur de Champagny, to the same effect as that of all the rest.”

WALSINGHAM: “I see not to what end his Highness of Parma has sent Mr. Bodman hither. The prince avows that he hath no commission from Spain.”

BODMAN: “His Highness was anxious to know what was her Majesty’s pleasure. So soon as that should be known, the prince could obtain ample authority. He would never have proceeded so far without meaning a good end.”

WALSINGHAM: “Very like. I dare say that his High-

¹ “Mozo.”—Relacion, etc., MS.

ness will obtain the commission. Meantime, as Prince of Parma, he writes these letters, and assists his sovereign perhaps more than he doth ourselves." ¹

Here the interview terminated. A few days later Bodman had another conversation with Burghley and Cobham. Reluctantly, at their urgent request, he set down in writing all that he had said concerning his mission. The lord treasurer said that the queen and her counselors were "ready to embrace peace when it was treated of sincerely." Meantime the queen had learned that the prince had been sending letters to the cautionary towns in Holland and Zealand, stating that her Majesty was about to surrender them to the King of Spain. These were tricks to make mischief, and were very detrimental to the queen.

Bodman replied that these were merely the idle stories of quidnuncs, and that the prince and all his counselors were dealing with the utmost sincerity.

Burghley answered that he had intercepted the very letters and had them in his possession.

A week afterward Bodman saw Walsingham alone, and was informed by him that the queen had written an answer to Parma's letter, and that negotiations for the future were to be carried on in the usual form or not at all. Walsingham, having thus got the better of his rivals and delved below their mines, dismissed the agent with brief courtesy. Afterward the discomfited Mr. Controller wished a private interview with Bodman. Bodman refused to speak with him except in presence of Lord Cobham. This Croft refused. In the same way Bodman contrived to get rid, as he said, of Lord Burghley and Lord Cobham, declining to speak

¹ Relacion, etc., MS.

with either of them alone. Soon afterward he returned to the provinces.¹

The queen's letter to Parma was somewhat caustic. It was obviously composed through the inspiration of Walsingham rather than that of Burghley. The letter brought by a certain Grafigni and a certain Bodman, she said, was a very strange one, and written under a delusion. It was a very grave error that, in her name, without her knowledge, contrary to her disposition, and to the prejudice of her honor, such a person as this Grafigni, or any one like him, should have the audacity to commence such a business, as if she had, by messages to the prince, sought a treaty with his king, who had so often returned evil for her good. Grafigni, after representing the contrary to his Highness, had now denied in presence of her counselors having received any commission from the queen. She also briefly gave the result of Bodman's interviews with Burghley and the others, just narrated. That agent had intimated that Parma would procure authority to treat for peace, if assured that the queen would lend her ear to any propositions.

She replied by referring to her published declarations as showing her powerful motives for interfering in these affairs. It was her purpose to save her own realm and to rescue her ancient neighbors from misery and from slavery. To this end she should still direct her actions, notwithstanding the sinister rumors which had

¹ *Relacion de lo sucedido, etc., MS.* A similar account, with less detail, of these secret proceedings is in the State Paper Office, in the Holland Correspondence, entitled "A declaration of the manner of treating of peace underhand to the Earl of Leicester," *MS. anno 1586.*

been spread that she was inclined to peace before providing for the security and liberty of her allies. She was determined never to separate their cause from her own. Propositions tending to the security of herself and of her neighbors would always be favorably received.¹

Parma, on his part, informed his master that there could be no doubt that the queen and the majority of her council abhorred the war, and that already much had been gained by the fictitious negotiation. Lord Treasurer Burghley had been interposing endless delays and difficulties in the way of every measure proposed for the relief of Lord Leicester, and the assistance rendered him had been most lukewarm. Meantime the prince had been able, he said, to achieve much success in the field, and the English had done nothing to prevent it. Since the return of Grafigni and Bodman, however, it was obvious that the English government had disowned these non-commissioned diplomatists. The whole negotiation and all the negotiators were now discredited, but there was no doubt that there had been a strong desire to treat, and great disappointment at the result. Grafigni and Andrea de Loo had been publishing everywhere in Antwerp that England would consider the peace as made so soon as his Majesty should be willing to accept any propositions.²

His Majesty, meanwhile, sat in his cabinet, without the slightest intention of making or accepting any prop-

¹ Carta descifrada de la Reyna de Inglaterra a Principe de Parma, July 8, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

A copy is also, written in the Italian language, in the S. P. Office, Flanders Correspondence, MS.

² Parma to Philip II., August 4, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

ositions save those that were impossible. He smiled benignantly at his nephew's dissimulation and at the good results which it had already produced. He approved of gaining time, he said, by fictitious negotiations and by the use of a mercantile agent, for no doubt such a course would prevent the proper succors from being sent to the Earl of Leicester. If the English would hand over to him the cautionary towns held by them in Holland and Zealand, promise no longer to infest the seas, the Indies, and the isles with their corsairs, and guarantee the complete obedience to their king and submission to the Holy Catholic Church of the rebellious provinces, perhaps something might be done with them; but, on the whole, he was inclined to think that they had been influenced by knavish and deceitful motives from the beginning. He enjoined it upon Parma, therefore, to proceed with equal knavery—taking care, however, not to injure his reputation—and to enter into negotiations wherever occasion might serve, in order to put the English off their guard and to keep back the reinforcements so imperatively required by Leicester.¹

And the reinforcements were indeed kept back. Had Burghley and Croft been in the pay of Philip II. they could hardly have served him better than they had been doing by the course pursued. Here, then, is the explanation of the shortcomings of the English government toward Leicester and the states during the memorable spring and summer of 1586. No money, no soldiers, when most important operations in the field were required. The first general of the age was to be opposed by a man who had certainly never gained many laurels

¹ Philip II. to Parma, July 18, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

as a military chieftain, but who was brave and confident, and who, had he been faithfully supported by the government which sent him to the Netherlands, would have had his antagonist at a great disadvantage. Alexander had scarcely eight thousand effective men. Famine, pestilence, poverty, mutiny, beset and almost paralyzed him. Language could not exaggerate the absolute destitution of the country. Only miracles could save the king's cause, as Farnese repeatedly observed. A sharp, vigorous campaign, heartily carried on against him by Leicester and Hohenlo, with plenty of troops and money at command, would have brought the heroic champion of Catholicism to the ground. He was hemmed in upon all sides; he was cut off from the sea; he stood as it were in a narrowing circle, surrounded by increasing dangers. His own veterans, maddened by misery, stung by their king's ingratitude, naked, starving, ferocious, were turning against him. Mucio, like his evil genius, was spiriting away his supplies just as they were reaching his hands; a threatening tempest seemed rolling up from France; the whole population of the provinces which he had "reconciled"—a million of paupers—was crying to him for bread; great commercial cities, suddenly blasted and converted into dens of thieves and beggars, were cursing the royal author of their ruin and uttering wild threats against his vicegerent; there seemed, in truth, nothing left for Alexander but to plunge headlong into destruction, when, lo! Mr. Controller Croft advancing out of the clouds, like a propitious divinity, disguised in the garb of a foe—and the scene was changed.

The feeble old man, with his shuffling, horse-trucking servant, ex-spy of Monsieur, had accomplished more

work for Philip and Alexander than many regiments of Spaniards and Walloons could have done. The arm of Leicester was paralyzed upon the very threshold of success. The picture of these palace intrigues has been presented with minute elaboration, because, however petty and barren in appearance, they were in reality prolific of grave results. A series of victories by Parma was substituted for the possible triumphs of Elizabeth and the states.

The dissimulation of the Spanish court was fathomless. The secret correspondence of the times reveals to us that its only purpose was to deceive the queen and her counselors, and to gain time to prepare the grand invasion of England and subjugation of Holland—that double purpose which Philip could only abandon with life. There was never a thought, on his part, of honest negotiation. On the other hand, the queen was sincere, Burghley and Hatton and Cobham were sincere, Croft was sincere, so far as Spain was concerned. At least, they had been sincere. In the private and doleful dialogues between Bodman and Grafigni which we have just been overhearing, these intriguers spoke the truth, for they could have no wish to deceive each other, and no fear of eavesdroppers not to be born till centuries afterward. These conversations have revealed to us that the lord treasurer and three of his colleagues had been secretly doing their best to cripple Leicester, to stop the supplies for the Netherlands, and to patch up a hurried and unsatisfactory, if not a disgraceful, peace, and this with the concurrence of her Majesty. After their plots had been discovered by the vigilant secretary of state, there was a disposition to discredit the humbler instruments in the cabal. Elizabeth was not desirous of

peace. Far from it. She was qualmish at the very suggestion. Dire was her wrath against Bodman, De Loo, Grafigni, and the rest, at their misrepresentations on the subject. But she would "lend her ear." And that royal ear was lent, and almost fatal was the distilment poured into its porches. The pith and marrow of the great Netherland enterprise was sapped by the slow poison of the ill-timed negotiation. The fruit of Drake's splendid triumphs in America was blighted by it, the stout heart of the vainglorious but courageous Leicester was sickened by it, while, meantime, the maturing of the great armada scheme, by which the destruction of England was to be accomplished, was furthered through the unlimited procrastination so precious to the heart of Philip.

Fortunately the subtle Walsingham was there upon the watch to administer the remedy before it was quite too late, and to him England and the Netherlands were under lasting obligations. While Alexander and Philip suspected a purpose on the part of the English government to deceive them, they could not help observing that the Earl of Leicester was both deserted and deceived. Yet it had been impossible for the peace party in the government wholly to conceal their designs, when such prating fellows as Grafigni and De Loo were employed in what was intended to be a secret negotiation. In vain did the friends of Leicester in the Netherlands endeavor to account for the neglect with which he was treated, and for the destitution of his army. Hopelessly did they attempt to counteract those "advertisements of most fearful instance," as Richard Cavendish expressed himself, which were circulating everywhere.¹

¹ Cavendish to Burghley, March 18, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

"Champagny doth not spare most liberally to bruit abroad,"

Thanks to the babbling of the very men whose chief instructions had been to hold their tongues and to listen with all their ears, the secret negotiations between Parma and the English counselors became the town-talk at Antwerp, The Hague, Amsterdam, Brussels, London. It is true that it was impossible to know what was actually said and done, but that there was something doing concerning which Leicester was not to be informed was certain. Grafigni, during one of his visits to the obedient provinces, brought a brace of greyhounds and a couple of horses from England, as a present to Alexander,¹ and he perpetually went about bragging to every one of important negotiations which he was conducting, and of his intimacy with great personages in both countries. Leicester, on the other hand, was kept in the dark. To him Grafigni made no communications, but he once sent him a dish of plums, "which," said the earl, with superfluous energy, "I will boldly say to you, by the living God, is all that I have ever had since I came into these countries."² When it is remembered that Leicester had spent many thousand pounds in the Netherland cause,³ that he had deeply said Cavendish, "that he hath in his hands the conditions of peace offered by her Majesty unto the king his master, and that it is in his power to conclude at pleasure, wherein he affirmeth that one or two of the chiefest counselors about her are to handle the cause with him. This fearful and mischievous plot cannot but prove the root of great ruin; for this people, beaten with tedious, long, and sharp miseries, is made wonderful provident and suspicious, *saying that if they would suffer the Spanish yoke anew, they need no mediator, for they can easily conclude for themselves how, with least mischief, to become miserable again.*"

¹ Leyc. Corresp., 289, June 6 (16), 1586.

² *Ibid.*, 246, April 28 (May 8), 1586.

³ "I myself have prested," wrote the earl to Burghley, "above

mortgaged his property in order to provide more funds, that he had never received a penny of salary from the queen,¹ that his soldiers were "ragged and torn like

three thousand pounds among our men here since I came, and yet what need they be in, even when there is most need of service, all the world here doth see. Here hath been as lewd and dangerous mutinies as I cannot but grieve to think on it," etc.—March 29, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

¹ On the 14th May, 1586, the States-General resolved, in consequence of repeated applications on behalf of Leicester for money for his own personal expenses by way of salary, that although the queen had expressly agreed, by the contract with the states, to pay the salary of the governor-general and other military chiefs, they would themselves very willingly provide for his salary and maintenance, according to his petition. They previously requested Mr. Killigrew, however, to furnish them information as to how much monthly allowance her Majesty was then paying the lieutenant-general.

On the 16th May, 1586, the committee of the states appointed to confer with Mr. Killigrew concerning the amount of monthly allowance paid to the Earl of Leicester reported that Mr. Killigrew had openly and roundly declared that his Excellency, up to that hour, had never received one stiver of salary, and that his Excellency had told him so, on the word of a prince. "De zelve Heere Killigrew hen opentlyk ende rondelyk heeft vercleert dat Zyne Ex^{ce} tot op deze ure toe nyet eenen styver voer tractement hadde ontfangen van heere Ma^t, ende dat dezelve Zyne Ex^{ce} hem hadde geseyt en parole de prince, dat van zyn tractement by heere Ma^t nyet een woort was gesproken."—Resolutien van de Staten-Generaal, anno 1586, Hague Archives MS.

It was subsequently voted by the States-General (July 4, 1586) that the earl should receive a salary of sixty thousand florins yearly, to be drawn from the general duties upon cloth, and that in case her Majesty should continue in her refusal to contribute to his salary the annual allowance furnished by the states should be increased to one hundred thousand florins.

Ten thousand pounds sterling a year in the sixteenth century was certainly a princely salary, and it was hardly becoming in the

rogues—pity to see them,”¹ and were left without the means of supporting life, that he had been neglected, deceived, humiliated, until he was forced to describe himself as “a forlorn man set upon a forlorn hope,”² it must be conceded that Grafigni’s present of a dish of plums could hardly be sufficient to make him very happy.

From time to time he was enlightened by Sir Francis, who occasionally forced his adversaries’ hands, and who always faithfully informed the earl of everything he could discover. “We are so greedy of a peace, in respect of the charges of the wars,” he wrote in April, “as in the procuring thereof we weigh neither honor nor safety. Somewhat here is a-dealing underhand, wherein there is great care taken that I should not be made acquainted withal.”³ But with all their great care, the conspirators, as it has been seen, were sometimes outwitted by the secretary, and, when put to the blush, were forced to take him into half-confidence. “Your Lordship may see,” he wrote, after getting possession of Parma’s letter to the queen and unraveling Croft’s intrigues, “what effects are wrought by such weak ministers. *They that have been the employers of them are ashamed of the matter.*”⁴

Unutterable was the amazement, as we have seen, of Bodman and Grafigni when they had suddenly found themselves confronted in Burghley’s private apartments in Greenwich Palace, whither they had been conducted queen, who refused to pay her own favorite “a stiver,” to censure any shortcomings of the states, who proved themselves so much more liberal than herself. (Resoluetien, etc., ubi sup.)

¹ Leyc. Corresp., 285, May 31 (June 10), 1586.

² Ibid., 290, June 6 (16), 1586.

³ Ibid., 223, April 11 (21), 1586.

⁴ Ibid., 321, June 24 (July 4), 1586.

so mysteriously after dark from the secret pavilion, by the grave secretary of state, whom they had been so anxious to deceive; and great was the embarrassment of Croft and Cobham, and even of the imperturbable Burghley.

And thus patiently did Walsingham pick his course, plummet in hand, through the mists and along the quicksands, and faithfully did he hold out signals to his comrade embarked on the same dangerous voyage. As for the earl himself, he was shocked at the short-sighted policy of his mistress, mortified by the neglect to which he was exposed, disappointed in his ambitious schemes. Vehemently and judiciously he insisted upon the necessity of vigorous field operations throughout the spring and summer thus frittered away in frivolous negotiations. He was for peace, if a lasting and honorable peace could be procured; but he insisted that the only road to such a result was through a "good sharp war."¹ His troops were mutinous for want of pay, so that he had been obliged to have a few of them executed, although he protested that he would rather have "gone a thousand miles afoot"² than have done so; and he was crippled by his government at exactly the time when his great adversary's condition was most forlorn. Was it strange that the proud earl should be fretting his heart away when such golden chances were eluding his grasp? He would "creep upon the ground," he said, "as far as his hands and knees would carry him, to have a good peace for her Majesty; but his care was to have a peace indeed, and not a show of it."³ It was

¹ Leye. Corresp., 254, April 30 (May 10), 1586.

² Leicester to Burghley, March 29, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ Leye. Corresp., 253, April 30 (May 10), 1586.

the cue of Holland and England to fight before they could expect to deal upon favorable terms with their enemy. He was quick enough to see that his false colleagues at home were playing into the enemy's hands. Victory was what was wanted; victory the earl pledged himself, if properly seconded, to obtain; and, braggart though he was, it is by no means impossible that he might have redeemed his pledge. "If her Majesty will use her advantage," he said, "she shall bring the king, and especially this Prince of Parma, to seek peace in other sort than by way of merchants."¹ Of courage and confidence the governor had no lack. Whether he was capable of outgeneraling Alexander Farnese or no will be better seen, perhaps, in subsequent chapters; but there is no doubt that he was reasonable enough in thinking, at that juncture, that a hard campaign rather than a "merchants' brokerage"² was required to obtain an honorable peace. Lofty, indeed, was the scorn of the aristocratic Leicester that "merchants and peddlers should be paltering in so weighty a cause,"³ and daring to send him a dish of plums when he was hoping half a dozen regiments from the queen; and a sorry business, in truth, the peddlers had made of it.

Never had there been a more delusive diplomacy, and it was natural that the lieutenant-general abroad and the statesman at home should be sad and indignant, seeing England drifting to utter shipwreck while pursuing that phantom of a pacific haven. Had Walsingham and himself tampered with the enemy, as some counselors he could name had done, Leicester asserted that the

¹ Leye. Corresp., 251, April 30 (May 10), 1586.

² Ibid., 247, April 28 (May 8), 1586.

³ Ibid., 254, April 30 (May 10), 1586.

gallows would be thought too good for them;¹ and yet he hoped he might be hanged if the whole Spanish faction in England could procure for the queen a peace fit for her to accept.²

Certainly it was quite impossible for the Spanish faction to bring about a peace. No human power could bring it about. Even if England had been willing and able to surrender Holland, bound hand and foot, to Philip, even then she could only have obtained a hollow armistice. Philip had sworn in his inmost soul the conquest of England and the dethronement of Elizabeth. His heart was fixed. It was only by the subjugation of England that he hoped to recover the Netherlands. England was to be his stepping-stone to Holland. The invasion was slowly but steadily maturing, and nothing could have diverted the king from his great purpose. In the very midst of all these plots and counterplots, Bodmans and Grafignis, English geldings and Irish greyhounds, dishes of plums and autograph letters of her Majesty and his Highness, the prince was deliberately discussing all the details of the invasion, which, as it was then hoped, would be ready by the autumn of the year 1586. Although he had sent a special agent to Philip, who was to state by word of mouth that which it was deemed unsafe to write,³ yet Alexander, perpetually urged by his master, went at last more fully into particulars than he had ever ventured to do before, and

¹ Leye. Corresp., 254.

² *Ibid.*

³ Parma to Philip II., April 20, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS. Also a paper epigraphed: "Lo que dijo J. B. Piata [the agent alluded to in the text] a Don Juan de Idiaquez, 24 Junio, 1586," Arch. de Sim. MS.

this, too, at the very moment when Elizabeth was most seriously "lending her ear" to negotiation, and most vehemently expressing her wrath at Sir Thomas Heneage for dealing candidly with the States-General.¹

The prince observed that when, two or three years before, he had sent his master an account of the coasts, anchoring-places, and harbors of England, he had then expressed the opinion that the conquest of England was an enterprise worthy of the grandeur and Christianity of his Majesty, and not so difficult as to be considered altogether impossible. To make himself absolutely master of the business, however, he had then thought that the king should have no associates in the scheme and should make no account of the inhabitants of England.² Since that time the project had become more difficult of accomplishment, because it was now a stale and common topic of conversation everywhere,—in Italy, Germany, and France,—so that there could be little doubt that rumors on the subject were daily reaching the ears of Queen Elizabeth and of every one in her kingdom. Hence she had made a strict alliance with Sweden, Denmark, the Protestant princes of Germany, and even with the Turks and the French. Nevertheless, in spite of these obstacles, the king, placing his royal hand to the work, might well accomplish the task; for the favor of the Lord, whose cause it was, would be sure to give him success.

Being so Christian and Catholic a king, Philip naturally desired to extend the area of the Holy Church, and to come to the relief of so many poor, innocent

¹ MS. letter of Parma to Philip II., April 20, 1586, before cited.

² "No haciendo caso de los propios del país."—*Ibid.*

martyrs in England, crying aloud before the Lord for help.¹ Moreover, Elizabeth had fomented rebellion in the king's provinces for a long time secretly, and now, since the fall of Antwerp, and just as Holland and Zealand were falling into his grasp, openly.

Thus, in secret and in public, she had done the very worst she could do; and it was very clear that the Lord, for her sins, had deprived her of understanding,² in order that his Majesty might be the instrument of that chastisement which she so fully deserved. A monarch of such great prudence, valor, and talent as Philip could now give all the world to understand that those who dared to lose a just and decorous respect for him, as this good lady had done, would receive such chastisement as royal power guided by prudent counsel could inflict.³ Parma assured his sovereign that, if the conquest of England were effected, that of the Netherlands would be finished with much facility and brevity, but that otherwise, on account of the situation, strength, and obstinacy of those people, it would be a very long, perilous, and at best doubtful business.⁴

"Three points," he said, "were most vital to the invasion of England—secrecy, maintenance of the civil war

¹ "Tantos pobres y inocentes y martires qui sean esclamando delante del divino conspecto," etc.—Parma to Philip II., MS. before cited.

² "Que nuestro Señor por sus pecados le ha quitado de todo punto el entendimiento."—Ibid.

³ "Que no se han a perder el decoro y respeto a V. M. como lo ha hecho esta buena dama," etc.—Ibid.

⁴ "Se acabará con harta facilidad y brevedad lo de aca [viz., the Netherlands] que de otra manera, por la situacion, fortaleza, y obstinacion de estas gentes, sera negocio largo, peligroso, y aun dudoso."—Ibid.

in France, and judicious arrangement of matters in the provinces."

The French, if unoccupied at home, would be sure to make the enterprise so dangerous as to become almost impossible; for it might be laid down as a general maxim that that nation, jealous of Philip's power, had always done and would always do what it could to counteract his purposes.

With regard to the Netherlands, it would be desirable to leave a good number of troops in those countries,—at least as many as were then stationed there,—besides the garrisons, and also to hold many German and Swiss mercenaries in *wartgeld*. It would be further desirable that Alexander should take most of the personages of quality and sufficiency in the provinces over with him to England, in order that they should not make mischief in his absence.¹

With regard to the point of secrecy, that was, in Parma's opinion, the most important of all. All leagues must become more or less public, particularly those contrived at or with Rome. Such being the case, the Queen of England would be well aware of the Spanish projects, and, besides her militia at home, would levy German infantry and cavalry, and provide plenty of vessels, relying therein upon Holland and Zealand, where ships and sailors were in such abundance. Moreover, the English and the Netherlanders knew the coasts, currents, tides, shallows, quicksands, ports, better than did the pilots of any fleets that the king could send thither. Thus, having his back assured, the enemy would meet them in front at a disadvantage. Although, notwithstanding this inequality, the enemy would be

¹ MS. letter of Parma to Philip II. last cited.

beaten, yet if the engagement should be warm the Spaniards would receive an amount of damage which could not fail to be inconvenient, particularly as they would be obliged to land their troops and to give battle to those who would be watching their landing. Moreover, the English would be provided with cavalry, of which his Majesty's forces would have very little, on account of the difficulty of its embarkation.¹

The obedient Netherlands would be the proper place in which to organize the whole expedition. There the regiments could be filled up, provisions collected, the best way of effecting the passage ascertained, and the force largely increased without exciting suspicion; but with regard to the fleet, there were no ports there capacious enough for large vessels. Antwerp had ceased to be a seaport; but a large number of flat-bottomed barges, hoys, and other barks, more suitable for transporting soldiers, could be assembled in Dunkirk, Grave-lines, and Nieupoort, which, with some five-and-twenty larger vessels, would be sufficient to accompany the fleet.

The queen, knowing that there were no large ships, nor ports to hold them, in the obedient provinces, would be unsuspecting if no greater levies seemed to be making than the exigencies of the Netherlands might apparently require.

The flat-bottomed boats, drawing two or three feet of water, would be more appropriate than ships of war drawing twenty feet. The passage across in favorable weather might occupy from eight to twelve hours.

The number of troops for the invading force should be thirty thousand infantry, besides five hundred light

¹ MS. letter of Parma to Philip II. last cited.

troopers, with saddles, bridles, and lances, but without horses, because, in Alexander's opinion, it would be easier to mount them in England. Of these thirty thousand there should be six thousand Spaniards, six thousand Italians, six thousand Walloons, nine thousand Germans, and three thousand Burgundians.

Much money would be required—at least three hundred thousand dollars the month for the new force, besides the regular one hundred and fifty thousand for the ordinary provision in the Netherlands; and this ordinary provision would be more necessary than ever, because a mutiny breaking forth in the time of the invasion would be destruction to the Spaniards both in England and in the provinces.

The most appropriate part of the coast for a landing would, in Alexander's opinion, be between Dover and Margate, because the Spaniards, having no footing in Holland and Zealand, were obliged to make their starting-point in Flanders. The country about Dover was described by Parma as populous, well wooded, and much divided by hedges, advantageous for infantry, and not requiring a larger amount of cavalry than the small force at his disposal, while the people there were domestic in their habits, rich, and therefore less warlike, less trained to arms, and more engrossed by their occupations and their comfortable ways of life.¹ Therefore, although some encounters would take place, yet, after the commanders of the invading troops had given distinct and clear orders, it would be necessary to leave the rest in the hands of God, who governs all things, and from

¹ "Domestica y rica, y la gente de ella consiguiente es menos armigera y bellicosa, y dada a sus trabajos y comodidades."—MS. letter of Parma before cited.

whose bounty and mercy it was to be hoped that he would favor a cause so eminently holy, just, and his own.¹

It would be necessary to make immediately for London, which city, not being fortified, would be very easily taken. This point gained, the whole framework of the business might be considered as well put together.² If the queen should fly,—as, being a woman, she probably would do,—everything would be left in such confusion as, with the blessing of God, it might soon be considered that the holy and heroic work had been accomplished.³ Her Majesty, it was suggested, would probably make her escape in a boat before she could be captured, but the conquest would be nevertheless effected. Although, doubtless, some English troops might be got together to return and try their fortune, yet it would be quite useless; for the invaders would have already planted themselves upon the soil, and then, by means of frequent excursions and forays hither and thither about the island, all other places of importance would be gained, and the prosperous and fortunate termination of the adventure assured.⁴

As, however, everything was to be provided for, so, in case the secret could not be preserved, it would be

¹ “En manos de Dios qui gobierna todas las cosas, y de cuya bondad y misericordia se debe esperar que faborecera causa tan santa, justa, y propia suya.”—MS. letter of Parma before cited.

² “Sara tan facil de ganar, lo cual conseguido, se puede tener por tan buen entablado el negocio.”—Ibid.

³ “Se acogiesse, como siendo muger es de creer . . . con la ayuda de n^o señor, podria tener por acabada obra tan suya y heroica.”—Ibid.

⁴ “Discurriendo la isla, ganando plazas de importancia . . . y se puede tener por asegurado el prospero y felice fin.”—Ibid.

necessary for Philip, under pretext of defending himself against the English and French corsairs, to send a large armada to sea, as doubtless the queen would take the same measure. If the king should prefer, however, notwithstanding Alexander's advice to the contrary, to have confederates in the enterprise, then, the matter being public, it would be necessary to prepare a larger and stronger fleet than any which Elizabeth, with the assistance of her French and Netherland allies, could oppose to him. That fleet should be well provided with vast stores of provisions, sufficient to enable the invading force, independently of forage, to occupy three or four places in England at once, as the enemy would be able to come from various towns and strong places to attack them.

As for the proper season for the expedition, it would be advisable to select the month of October of the current year, because the English barns would then be full of wheat and other forage, and the earth would have been sown for the next year—points of such extreme importance that if the plan could not be executed at that time it would be as well to defer it until the following October.¹

The prince recommended that the negotiations with the League should be kept spinning, without allowing them to come to a definite conclusion, because there would be no lack of difficulties perpetually offering themselves,² and the more intricate and involved the policy of France, the better it would be for the interests

¹ MS. letter of Parma before cited.

² "Que la platica de la liga vaya adelante sin concluyrse, alargardola todo lo que se pudiese, pues no faltaran dificultades que se ofreceran."—Ibid.

of Spain. Alexander expressed the utmost confidence that his Majesty, with his powerful arm, would overcome all obstacles in the path of his great project, and would show the world that he "could do a little more than what was possible."¹ He also assured his master, in most extravagant language, of his personal devotion, adding that it was unnecessary for him to offer his services in this particular enterprise, because, ever since his birth, he had dedicated and consecrated himself to execute his royal commands.

He further advised that old Peter Ernest Mansfeld should be left commander-in-chief of the forces in the Netherlands during his own absence in England. "Mansfeld was an honorable cavalier," he said, "and a faithful servant of the king; and although somewhat ill-conditioned at times, yet he had essential good qualities, and was the only general fit to be trusted alone."²

The reader, having thus been permitted to read the inmost thoughts of Philip and Alexander, and to study their secret plans for conquering England in October, while their frivolous yet mischievous negotiations with the queen had been going on from April to June, will be better able than before to judge whether Leicester were right or no in doubting if a good peace could be obtained by a "merchants' brokerage."

And now, after examining these pictures of interaulic politics and backstairs diplomacy, which represent so large and characteristic a phasis of European history during the year 1586, we must throw a glance at the external, more stirring, but not more significant public events which were taking place during the same period.

¹ "Y se llegará a hacer algo mas de lo posible."—MS. letter of Parma before cited.

² Ibid.

CHAPTER IX

Military plans in the Netherlands—The elector and electorate of Cologne—Martin Schenck—His career before serving the states—Franeker University founded—Parma attempts Grave—Battle on the Meuse—Success and vainglory of Leicester—St. George's day triumphantly kept at Utrecht—Parma not so much appalled as it was thought—He besieges and reduces Grave, and is master of the Meuse—Leicester's rage at the surrender of Grave—His revenge—Parma on the Rhine—He besieges and assaults Neuss—Horrible fate of the garrison and city, which Leicester was unable to relieve—Axel surprised by Maurice and Sydney—The Zealand regiment given to Sydney—Condition of the Irish and English troops—Leicester takes the field—He reduces Doesburg—He lays siege to Zutphen, which Parma prepares to relieve—The English intercept the convoy—Battle of Warnsfeld—Sir Philip Sydney wounded—Results of the encounter—Death of Sydney at Arnheim—Gallantry of Edward Stanley.

FIVE great rivers hold the Netherland territory in their coils. Three are but slightly separated,—the Yssel, Waal, and ancient Rhine,—while the Schelde and Meuse are spread more widely asunder. Along each of these streams were various fortified cities, the possession of which, in those days, when modern fortification was in its infancy, implied the control of the surrounding country. The lower part of all the rivers, where they mingled with the sea and became wide estuaries, belonged to the Republic, for the coasts and the ocean were in the hands of the Hollanders and English.

Above, the various strong places were alternately in the hands of the Spaniards and of the patriots.

Thus Antwerp, with the other Schelde cities, had fallen into Parma's power, but Flushing, which controlled them all, was held by Philip Sydney for the queen and states. On the Meuse, Maestricht and Roermond were Spanish, but Venlo, Grave, Meghen, and other towns held for the commonwealth. On the Waal, the town of Nimwegen had, through the dexterity of Martin Schenek, been recently transferred to the royalists, while the rest of that river's course was true to the Republic. The Rhine, strictly so called, from its entrance into the Netherlands, belonged to the rebels. Upon its elder branch, the Yssel, Zutphen was in Parma's hands, while, a little below, Deventer had been recently and adroitly saved by Leicester and Count Meurs from falling into the same dangerous grasp.

Thus the triple Rhine, after it had crossed the German frontier, belonged mainly, although not exclusively, to the states. But on the edge of the Batavian territory, the ancient river, just before dividing itself into its three branches, flowed through a debatable country which was even more desolate and forlorn, if possible, than the land of the obedient provinces.¹

This unfortunate district was the archiepiscopal electorate of Cologne. The city of Cologne itself, Neuss, and Rheinberg, on the river, Werl and other places in Westphalia, and the whole country around, were endangered, invaded, ravaged, and the inhabitants plundered, murdered, and subjected to every imaginable outrage, by rival bands of highwaymen enlisted in the support of the two rival bishops—beggars, out-

¹ Meteren, xiii. 235^{vo}.

casts, but high-born and learned churchmen both—who disputed the electorate.

At the commencement of the year a portion of the bishopric was still in the control of the deposed Protestant elector, Gerard Truchses, assisted, of course, by the English and the states. The city of Cologne was held by the Catholic elector, Ernest of Bavaria, Bishop of Liège; but Neuss and Rheinberg were in the hands of the Dutch Republic.

The military operations of the year were, accordingly, along the Meuse, where the main object of Parma was to wrest Grave from the Netherlands; along the Waal, where, on the other hand, the patriots wished to recover Nimwegen; on the Yssel, where they desired to obtain the possession of Zutphen; and in the Cologne electorate, where the Spaniards meant, if possible, to transfer Neuss and Rheinberg from Truchses to Elector Ernest. To clear the course of these streams, and especially to set free that debatable portion of the river territory which hemmed him in from neutral Germany and cut off the supplies from his starving troops, was the immediate design of Alexander Farnese.

Nothing could be more desolate than the condition of the electorate. Ever since Gerard Truchses had renounced the communion of the Catholic Church for the love of Agnes Mansfeld, and so gained a wife and lost his principality, he had been a dependent upon the impoverished Nassaus, or a supplicant for alms to the thrifty Elizabeth. The queen was frequently implored by Leicester, without much effect, to send the ex-elector a few hundred pounds to keep him from starving, as “he had not one groat to live upon,”¹ and a little later

¹ Leyc. Corresp., 378.

he was employed as a go-between, and almost a spy, by the earl in his quarrels with the patrician party rapidly forming against him in the states.

At Godesberg—the romantic ruins of which stronghold the traveler still regards with interest, placed as it is in the midst of that enchanting region where Drachenfels looks down on the crumbling tower of Roland and the convent of Nonnenwerth—the unfortunate Gerard had sustained a conclusive defeat. A small, melancholy man, accomplished, religious, learned, “very poor but very wise,” comely, but of mean stature, altogether an unlucky and forlorn individual,¹ he was not, after all, in very much inferior plight to that in which his rival, the Bavarian bishop, had found himself. Prince Ernest, Archbishop of Liège and Cologne, a hanger-on of his

¹ “When I spake of the elector here,” said Leicester, “I assure you he is a very wise gentleman, and if it were possible to set him in his place again, these countries were soon at quiet. . . . He is exceeding poor, and great pity. Believe me, my lord, he is worthy to be esteemed. He doth greatly love and honor her Majesty. I would to God your Lordship could but procure her Majesty to bestow five or six hundred pounds on him for a token. I have received more comfort and good advice of him than of any man here. He is very virtuous and very sound in religion, very grave and a comely person, but of a mean stature. His adversary doth all he can to put the King of Spain into his territories, yea, even into Cologne itself. He is very poor, and weary of his keeping that place with such charge. His bishopric of Liège is all spoiled also with these wars, and he no longer able to maintain his charges. A small matter would set up this man now. He hath many friends in Germany, and more of late than ever he had.”—Leicester to Burghley, February 28, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

Lord North had also conceived a favorable opinion of Truchses, whom he spoke of as a “rare gentleman, notably furnished with excellent gifts, religious, and worthy of all honor and estimation.”—North to Burghley, February 28, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

brother, who sought to shake him off, and a stipendiary of Philip, who was a worse paymaster than Elizabeth, had a sorry life of it, notwithstanding his nominal possession of the see. He was forced to go, disguised and in secret, to the Prince of Parma at Brussels,¹ to ask for assistance, and to mention, with lacrymose vehemence, that both his brother and himself had determined to renounce the episcopate unless the forces of the Spanish king could be employed to recover the cities on the Rhine. If Neuss and Rheinberg were not wrested from the rebels, Cologne itself would soon be gone. Ernest represented most eloquently to Alexander that if the Protestant archbishop were reinstated in the ancient see it would be a most perilous result for the ancient Church throughout all northern Europe. Parma kept the wandering prelate for a few days in his palace in Brussels, and then dismissed him, disguised and on foot, in the dusk of the evening, through the park gate.² He encouraged him with hopes of assistance, he represented to his sovereign the importance of preserving the Rhenish territory to Bishop Ernest and to Catholicism, but hinted that the declared intention of the Bavarian to resign the dignity was

¹ Parma to Philip II., February 28, 1586, Archivo de Simancas MS. Compare Strada, ii. 426.

² Parma to Philip II., MS. last cited. Compare Strada, who appears to be very much mistaken in representing the Elector Ernest as having been dismissed by Parma with great state, and with a magnificent escort of Belgian nobility, "because no mask can ever entirely disguise a prince, and because suns, even when under a cloud, have more spectators than ever."

"Nempe nulla larva totum principem tegit; immo soles, etiam isti quum deficiunt, tunc maxime spectatores habent," and so on (ii. 427).

probably a trick, because the archiepiscopate was no such very bad thing after all.¹

The archiepiscopate might be no very bad thing, but it was a most uncomfortable place of residence, at the moment, for prince or peasant. Overrun by hordes of brigands, and crushed almost out of existence by that most deadly of all systems of taxation, the brandschatzung, it was fast becoming a mere den of thieves. The brandschatzung had no name in English, but it was the well-known impost levied by roving commanders, and even by respectable generals of all nations. A hamlet, cluster of farm-houses, country district, or wealthy city, in order to escape being burned and ravaged, as the penalty of having fallen into a conqueror's hands, paid a heavy sum of ready money on the nail at command of the conqueror. The free companions of the sixteenth century drove a lucrative business in this particular branch of industry; and when to this was added the more direct profits derived from actual plunder, sack, and ransoming, it was natural that a large fortune was often the result to the thrifty and persevering commander of free-lances.

Of all the professors of this comprehensive art the terrible Martin Schenck was preëminent, and he was now ravaging the Cologne territory, having recently passed again to the service of the states. Immediately connected with the chief military events of the period which now occupies us, he was also the very archetype of the marauders whose existence was characteristic of the epoch. Born in 1549, of an ancient and noble family of Gelderland, Martin Schenck had inherited no property

¹ "Porque no le esta tan mal el electorado."—MS. letter of Parma last cited.

but a sword. Serving for a brief term as page to the Seigneur of Ysselstein, he joined, while yet a youth, the banner of William of Orange, at the head of two men-at-arms. The humble knight errant, with his brace of squires, was received with courtesy by the prince and the estates, but he soon quarreled with his patrons. There was a castle of Blyenbeek, belonging to his cousin, which he chose to consider his rightful property, because he was of the same race, and because it was a convenient and productive estate and residence. The courts had different views of public law, and supported the ousted cousin. Martin shut himself up in the castle, and having recently committed a rather discreditable homicide, which still further increased his unpopularity with the patriots, he made overtures to Parma.¹ Alexander was glad to enlist so bold a soldier on his side, and assisted Schenck in his besieged stronghold. For years afterward his services under the king's banner were most brilliant, and he rose to the highest military command, while his coffers, meantime, were rapidly filling with the results of his robberies and brandschatzungs. "T is a most courageous fellow," said Parma, "but rather a desperate highwayman than a valiant soldier."² Martin's couple of lances had expanded into a corps of free companions, the most truculent, the most obedient, the most rapacious in Christendom. Never were freebooters more formidable to the world at large, or more docile to their chief, than were the followers of General Schenck. Never was a more finished captain of highwaymen. He was a man who was never sober, yet who never smiled. His

¹ Meteren, xiii. 231. *Levensbeschrijving Nederl. Mannen*, vol. ii. in voce. Strada, ii. 633, et al.

² Parma to Philip II., June 6, 1585, *Arch. de Sim.* MS.

habitual intoxication seemed only to increase both his audacity and his taciturnity, without disturbing his reason. He was incapable of fear, of fatigue, of remorse. He could remain for days and nights without dismounting,—eating, drinking, and sleeping in the saddle,—so that to this terrible centaur his horse seemed actually a part of himself. His soldiers followed him about like hounds, and were treated by him like hounds. He habitually scourged them, often took with his own hand the lives of such as displeased him, and had been known to cause individuals of them to jump from the top of church steeples¹ at his command; yet the pack were ever staunch to his orders, for they knew that he always led them where the game was plenty. While serving under Parma he had twice most brilliantly defeated Hohenlo. At the battle of Hardenberg Heath he had completely outgeneraled that distinguished chieftain, slaying fifteen hundred of his soldiers at the expense of only fifty or sixty of his own. By this triumph he had preserved the important city of Groningen for Philip during an additional quarter of a century, and had been received in that city with rapture. Several startling years of victory and rapine he had thus run through as a royalist partizan. He became the terror and the scourge of his native Gelderland, and he was covered with wounds received in the king's service. He had been twice captured and held for ransom. Twice he had effected his escape. He had recently gained the city of Nimwegen. He was the most formidable, the most unscrupulous, the most audacious Netherlander that wore Philip's colors; but he had received small public reward for his services, and the wealth which he

¹ Archer, in Stow, 739.

earned on the highroad did not suffice for his ambition. He had been deeply disgusted when, at the death of Count Renneberg, Verdugo, a former stable-boy of Mansfeld, a Spaniard who had risen from the humblest rank to be a colonel and general, had been made governor of Friesland. He had smothered his resentment for a time, however, but had sworn within himself to desert at the most favorable opportunity. At last, after he had brilliantly saved the city of Breda from falling into the hands of the patriots, he was more enraged than he had ever been before when Haultepenne, of the house of Berlaymont, was made governor of that place in his stead.

On the 25th of May, 1585, at an hour after midnight, he had a secret interview with Count Meurs, stadholder for the states of Gelderland, and agreed to transfer his mercenary allegiance to the Republic. He made good terms. He was to be lieutenant-governor of Gelderland, and he was to have rank as marshal of the camp in the states' army, with a salary of twelve hundred and fifty guilders a month. He agreed to resign his famous castle of Blyenbeek, but was to be reimbursed with estates in Holland and Zeeland, of the annual value of four thousand florins.¹

After this treaty Martin and his free-lances served the states faithfully, and became sworn foes to Parma and the king. He gave and took no quarter, and his men, if captured, "paid their ransom with their heads."² He ceased to be the scourge of Gelderland, but he became the terror of the electorate. Early in 1586, accompanied by Hermann Kloet, the young and daring Dutch commandant of Neuss, he had swept down into

¹ Nederl. Mannen, etc., ubi sup.

² Doyley to Burghley, June 24, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

the Westphalian country, at the head of five hundred foot and five hundred horse. On the 18th of March he captured the city of Werl by a neat stratagem. The citizens, hemmed in on all sides by marauders, were in want of many necessaries of life, among other things of salt. Martin had, from time to time, sent some of his soldiers into the place, disguised as boors from the neighborhood, and carrying bags of that article. A pacific trading intercourse had thus been established between the burghers within and the banditti without the gates. Agreeable relations were formed within the walls, and a party of townsmen had agreed to coöperate with the followers of Schenck. One morning a train of wagons laden with soldiers neatly covered with salt made their appearance at the gate. At the same time a fire broke out most opportunely within the town. The citizens busily employed themselves in extinguishing the flames. The salted soldiers, after passing through the gateway, sprang from the wagons and mastered the watch. The town was carried at a blow. Some of the inhabitants were massacred as a warning to the rest; others were taken prisoners and held for ransom; a few, more fortunate, made their escape to the citadel. That fortress was stormed in vain, but the city was thoroughly sacked. Every house was rifled of its contents. Meantime Haultepenne collected a force of nearly four thousand men, boors, citizens, and soldiers, and came to besiege Schenck in the town, while, at the same time, attacks were made upon him from the castle. It was impossible for him to hold the city, but he had completely robbed it of everything valuable. Accordingly, he loaded a train of wagons with his booty, took with him thirty of the magistrates as hostages, with other wealthy

citizens, and marching in good order against Haultepenne, completely routed him, killing a number variously estimated at from five hundred to two thousand, and effected his retreat, desperately wounded in the thigh, but triumphant and laden with the spoils, to Venlo, on the Meuse, of which city he was governor.¹

“Surely this is a noble fellow, a worthy fellow,” exclaimed Leicester, who was filled with admiration at the bold marauder’s progress, and vowed that he was “the only soldier, in truth, that they had, for he was never idle, and had succeeded hitherto very happily.”²

And thus, at every point of the doomed territory of the little commonwealth, the natural atmosphere in which the inhabitants existed was one of blood and rapine. Yet during the very slight lull which was interposed in the winter of 1585–86 to the eternal clang of arms in Friesland the estates of that province, to their lasting honor, founded the University of Franeker. A dozen years before, the famous institution at Leyden had been established, as a reward to the burghers for their heroic defense of the city. And now this new proof was given of the love of Netherlanders, even in the midst of their misery and their warfare, for the more humane arts. The new college was well endowed from ancient church-lands, and not only was the education made nearly gratuitous, while handsome salaries were provided for the professors, but provision was made by which the poorer

¹ Meteren, *Strada, Nederl. Mannen, etc.*, ubi sup. Bor, ii. 699, 700. Bruce’s *Leyc. Corresp.*, 79, 139, 141, 167, 227, 265, 475. Lord North to Burghley, February 28, 1586, S. P. Office MS. Leicester to Burghley, same date, *ibid.* MS. Leicester to Burghley and Walsingham, March 15, 1586, *ibid.* MS.

² Leicester to Burghley and Walsingham, MS. ubi sup.

scholars could be fed and boarded at a very moderate expense. There was a table provided at an annual cost to the student of but fifty florins (five pounds), and a second and third table at the very low price of forty and thirty florins respectively. Thus the sum to be paid by the poorer class of scholars for a year's maintenance was less than three pounds sterling a year. The voice with which this infant seminary of the Muses first made itself heard above the din of war was but feeble, but the institution was destined to thrive, and to endow the world, for many successive generations, with the golden fruits of science and genius.¹

Early in the spring the war was seriously taken in hand by Farnese. It has already been seen that the Republic had been almost entirely driven out of Flanders and Brabant. The estates, however, still held Grave, Meghen, Batenburg, and Venlo, upon the Meuse. That river formed, as it were, a perfect circle of protection for the whole province of Brabant, and Farnese determined to make himself master of this great natural moat. Afterward he meant to possess himself of the Rhine, flowing in a parallel course about twenty-five miles farther to the east. In order to gain and hold the Meuse, the first step was to reduce the city of Grave. That town, upon the left or Brabant bank, was strongly fortified on its land side, where it was surrounded by low and fertile pastures, while, upon the other, it depended upon its natural foss, the river. It was, according to Lord North and the Earl of Leicester, the "strongest town in all the Low Countries, though but a little one."²

¹ Bor, ii. 672.

² North to Burghley, May 29, 1586, S. P. Office MS. Leicester to Queen Elizabeth, June 16, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

Baron Hemart, a young Gueldrian noble, of small experience in military affairs, commanded in the city, his garrison being eight hundred soldiers and about one thousand burgher guard.¹ As early as January, Farnese had ordered Count Mansfeld to lay siege to the place. Five forts had accordingly been constructed, above and below the town, upon the left bank of the river, while a bridge of boats thrown across the stream led to a fortified camp on the opposite side. Mansfeld, Mondragon, Bobadil, Aquila, and other distinguished veterans in Philip's service were engaged in the enterprise. A few unimportant skirmishes between Schenck and the Spaniards had taken place, but the city was already hard pressed, and, by the series of forts which environed it, was cut off from its supplies. It was highly important, therefore, that Grave should be relieved with the least possible delay.

Early in Easter week a force of three thousand men, under Hohenlo and Sir John Norris, was accordingly despatched by Leicester, with orders, at every hazard, to throw reinforcements and provisions into the place. They took possession at once of a stone sconce, called the Mill Fort, which was guarded by fifty men, mostly boors of the country.² These were nearly all hanged for "using malicious words" and for "railing against Queen Elizabeth,"³ and, a sufficient number of men being left to maintain the fort, the whole relieving force marched with great difficulty—for the river was rapidly

¹ Bor, ii. 707, 708. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 154, 155. Strada, ii. 410. Wagenaer, viii. 126.

² Occurrences from Holland, April 11 (21), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ Ibid. Compare Leye. Corresp., 218, April 5, 1586.

rising and flooding the country—along the right bank of the Meuse, taking possession of Batenburg and Ravenstein castles as they went. A force of four or five hundred Englishmen was then pushed forward to a point almost exactly opposite Grave, and within an English mile of the head of the bridge constructed by the Spaniards. Here, in the night of Easter Tuesday, they rapidly formed an intrenched camp upon the dike along the river, and, although molested by some armed vessels, succeeded in establishing themselves in a most important position.¹

On the morning of Easter Wednesday, April 16, Mansfeld, perceiving that the enemy had thus stolen a march upon him, ordered one thousand picked troops, all Spaniards, under Casco and other veterans, to assault this advanced post.² A reserve of two thousand was placed in readiness to support the attack. The Spaniards slowly crossed the bridge, which was swaying very dangerously with the current, and then charged the intrenched camp at a run. A quarrel between the different regiments as to the right of precedence precipitated the attack before the reserve, consisting of some picked companies of Mondragon's veterans, had been able to arrive. Coming in breathless and fatigued, the first assailants were readily repulsed in their first onset. Aquila then opportunely made his appearance, and the attack was renewed with great vigor. The defenders of the camp yielded at the third charge and fled in dismay, while the Spaniards, leaping the barriers, scattered hither and thither in the ardor of pursuit. The routed Englishmen fled swiftly

Occurrences from Holland, MS.

² Strada, ii. 413 seq. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 154, 155. Occurrences, etc., MS. Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 223, 226.

along the oozy dike, in hopes of joining the main body of the relieving party, who were expected to advance, with the dawn, from their position six miles farther down the river. Two miles long the chase lasted, and it seemed probable that the fugitives would be overtaken and destroyed, when, at last, from behind a line of mounds which stretched toward Batenburg and had masked their approach, appeared Count Hohenlo and Sir John Norris, at the head of twenty-five hundred Englishmen and Hollanders. This force advanced as rapidly as the slippery ground and the fatigue of a two hours' march would permit to the rescue of their friends, while the retreating English rallied, turned upon their pursuers, and drove them back over the path along which they had just been charging in the full career of victory. The fortune of the day was changed, and in a few minutes Hohenlo and Norris would have crossed the river and entered Grave, when the Spanish companies of Bobadil and other commanders were seen marching along the quaking bridge.

Three thousand men on each side now met at push of pike on the bank of the Meuse.¹ The rain was pouring in torrents, the wind was blowing a gale, the stream was rapidly rising and threatening to overwhelm its shores. By a tacit and mutual consent, both armies paused for a few moments in full view of each other. After this brief interval they closed again, breast to breast, in sharp and steady conflict. The ground, slippery with rain and with blood, which was soon flowing almost as fast as the rain, afforded an unsteady footing to the combatants. They staggered like drunken men, fell upon their knees or upon their backs, and still, kneeling or rolling pros-

¹ Strada, ii. 413, 414. Occurrences from Holland, MS.

trate, maintained the deadly conflict. For the space of an hour and a half the fierce encounter of human passion outmastered the fury of the elements. Norris and Hohenlo fought at the head of their columns, like paladins of old. The Englishman was wounded in the mouth and breast; the count was seen to gallop past one thousand musketeers and calivermen of the enemy, and to escape unscathed. But as the strength of the soldiers exhausted itself, the violence of the tempest increased. The floods of rain and the blasts of the hurricane at last terminated the affray. The Spaniards, fairly conquered, were compelled to a retreat, lest the rapidly rising river should sweep away the frail and trembling bridge, over which they had passed to their unsuccessful assault. The English and Netherlanders remained masters of the field. The rising flood, too, which was fast converting the meadows into a lake, was as useful to the conquerors as it was damaging to the Spaniards.

In the course of the few following days a large number of boats was despatched, before the very eyes of Parma, from Batenburg into Grave, Hohenlo, who had "most desperately adventured his person" throughout the whole affair, entering the town himself. A force of five hundred men, together with provisions enough to last a year, was thrown into the city, and the course of the Meuse was, apparently, secured to the Republic. In this important action about one hundred and fifty Dutch and English were killed, and probably four hundred Spaniards, including several distinguished officers.¹

¹ Leicester to Burghley, April 6 (16), 1586, S. P. Office MS. R. Cavendish to Burghley, April 8 (18), 1586, S. P. Office MS. Lord Willoughby to Burghley, April 9 (19), 1586, S. P. Office MS. Occurrences from Holland, MS. Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 226, 244,



COUNT HOHENLO

The Earl of Leicester was incredibly elated so soon as the success of this enterprise was known. "Oh that her Majesty knew," he cried, "how easy a match now she hath with the King of Spain, and what millions of afflicted people she hath relieved in these countries! This summer, this summer, I say, would make an end to her immortal glory."¹ He was no friend to his countryman, the gallant Sir John Norris,—whom, however, he could not help applauding on this occasion,—but he was in raptures with Hohenlo. Next to God, he assured the queen's government that the victory was owing to the count. "He is both a valiant man and a wise man, and the painfullest that ever I knew," he said, adding, as a secret, that "five hundred Englishmen of the best Flemish training had flatly and shamefully run away" when the fight had been renewed by Hohenlo and Norris. He recommended that her Majesty should send her picture to the count, worth two hundred pounds, which he would value at more than one thousand pounds in money, and

245, 252, 253. Parma to Philip II., April 27 and May 9, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

Lord North to Burghley, May 2 (12), 1586, S. P. Office MS.: "Count Hollock performed this service with wisdom and most valiantly in his own person. I cannot give him too much praise, because there is so much due to him."

Compare Strada, ii. 413, 414. Meteren, xiii. 234. Hoofd, 155 seq., et al. It is of slight consequence at the present day to know the exact number of the combatants who perished in this hotly contested but now forgotten field. As a specimen of conflicting statistics after a battle, it is worth while to observe that, according to some *eye-witnesses*, nine hundred Spaniards were killed, and, according to others, thirty, while, on the other hand, the statement of the loss sustained by their antagonists varied from fifty to seven hundred.

¹ Bruce's Leyc. Corresp., 264, May 8 (18), 1586.

he added that "for her sake the count had greatly left his drinking."¹

As for the Prince of Parma, Leicester looked upon him as conclusively beaten. He spoke of him as "marvelously appalled" by this overthrow of his forces, but he assured the government that if the prince's "choler should press him to seek revenge," he should soon be driven out of the country. The earl would follow him "at an inch," and effectually frustrate all his undertakings. "If the Spaniard have such a May as he has had an April," said Lord North, "it will put water in his wine."²

Meantime, as St. George's day was approaching, and as the earl was fond of banquets and ceremonies, it was thought desirable to hold a great triumphal feast at Utrecht. His journey to that city from The Hague was a triumphal procession. In all the towns through which he passed he was entertained with military display, pompous harangues, interludes, dumb-shows, and allegories. At Amsterdam, a city which he compared to Venice for situation and splendor, and where one thousand ships were constantly lying, he was received with "sundry great whales and other fishes of hugeness," that gamboled about his vessel and convoyed him to the shore. These monsters of the deep presented him to the burgomaster and magistrates, who were awaiting him on the quay. The burgomaster made him a Latin oration, to which Dr. Bartholomew Clerk responded, and then the earl was ushered to the grand square, upon which, in his honor, a magnificent living picture was exhibited, in which he figured as Moses, at the head of

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 245.

² North to Burghley, May 2 (12), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

the Israelites, smiting the Philistines hip and thigh.¹ After much mighty banqueting in Amsterdam, as in the other cities, the governor-general came to Utrecht. Through the streets of this antique and most picturesque city flows the palsied current of the Rhine, and every barge and bridge was decorated with the flowers of spring. Upon this spot, where, eight centuries before, the Anglo-Saxon Willibrord had first astonished the wild Frisians with the pacific doctrines of Jesus and had been stoned to death as his reward, stood now a more arrogant representative of English piety. The balconies were crowded with fair women and decorated with scarfs and banners. From the earl's residence—the ancient palace of the Knights of Rhodes—to the cathedral, the way was lined with a double row of burgher guards, wearing red roses on their arms, and appareled in the splendid uniforms for which the Netherlanders were celebrated. Trumpeters, in scarlet and silver; barons, knights, and great officers, in cloth of gold and silks of all colors; the young Earl of Essex, whose career was to be so romantic, and whose fate so tragic; those two ominous personages, the deposed little archbishop-elect of Cologne, with his melancholy face, and the unlucky Don Antonio, Pretender of Portugal, for whom, dead or alive, thirty thousand crowns and a dukedom² were perpetually offered by Philip II.; young Maurice of Nassau, the future controller of European destinies; great counselors of state, gentlemen, guardsmen, and portecullis-herald, with the coat of arms of Elizabeth, rode in solemn procession along. Then great Leicester himself, “most prince-like in the robes of his order,” guarded by a troop

¹ Leye. Corresp., 476 seq.

² Declaration of Don Antonio, in Bor, ii. 769.

of burghers and by his own fifty halberdmen in scarlet cloaks trimmed with white and purple velvet, pranced gorgeously by.¹

The ancient cathedral, built on the spot where St. Willibrord had once ministered, with its light, tapering brick tower, three hundred and sixty feet in height, its exquisitely mullioned windows, and its elegantly foliated columns, soon received the glittering throng. Hence, after due religious ceremonies, and an English sermon from Master Knewstubs, Leicester's chaplain, was a solemn march back again to the palace, where a stupendous banquet was already laid in the great hall.²

On the dais at the upper end of the table, blazing with plate and crystal, stood the royal chair, with the queen's plate and knife and fork before it, exactly as if she had been present, while Leicester's trencher and stool were set respectfully quite at the edge of the board. In the neighborhood of this post of honor sat Count Maurice, the elector, the pretender, and many illustrious English personages, with the fair Agnes Mansfeld, Princess Chimay, the daughters of William the Silent, and other dames of high degree.

Before the covers were removed came limping up to the dais grim-visaged Martin Schenck, freshly wounded, but triumphant, from the sack of Werl, and black John Norris, scarcely cured of the spear-wounds in his face and breast received at the relief of Grave. The sword of knighthood³ was laid upon the shoulder of each hero

¹ Holinshed, iv. 658 seq. Stow, 717. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 145.

² Ibid.

³ Bor, ii. 699, 700. Stow, Holinshed, ubi sup. Leye. Corresp., 252, 253, April 16 (26), 1586.

"*Shenks* is a worthy fellow," said Leicester, who never could

by the Earl of Leicester, as her Majesty's vicegerent, and then the ushers marshaled the mighty feast. Meats in the shape of lions, tigers, dragons, and leopards, flanked by peacocks, swans, pheasants, and turkeys "in their natural feathers as in their greatest pride," disappeared, course after course, sonorous metal blowing meanwhile the most triumphant airs. After the banquet came dancing, vaulting, tumbling, together with the "forces of Hercules, which gave great delight to the strangers," after which the company separated until evensong.

Then again "great was the feast," says the chronicler, a mighty supper following hard upon the gigantic dinner. After this there was tilting at the barriers, the young Earl of Essex and other knights bearing themselves more chivalrously than would seem to comport with so much eating and drinking. Then, horrible to relate, came another "most sumptuous banquet of sugarmeates for the men-at-arms and the ladies," after which, it being now midnight, the Lord of Leicester bade the whole company good rest, and the men-at-arms and ladies took their leave.¹

But while all this chivalrous banqueting and holiday-making was in hand, the Prince of Parma was in reality not quite so much "appalled" by the relief of Grave as his antagonist had imagined. The earl, flushed with the success of Hohenlo, already believed himself master of the country, and assured his government that if he get nearer than this to the name of the terrible partizan. He also mentioned that he had given the "worthy fellow" a chain, as from her Majesty, adding, with an eye to Elizabeth's thrift, that if she thought he had paid too much for it he would cheerfully pay the balance over what seemed the right sum out of his own pocket (Leyc. Corresp., 227, 228).

¹ Stow, Holinshed, Bor, Hoofd, ubi sup.

should be reasonably well supplied he would have Antwerp back again, and Bruges besides, "before mid-June."¹

Never, said he, was "the Prince of Parma so dejected nor so melancholy since he came into these countries, nor so far out of courage."² And it is quite true that Alexander had reason to be discouraged. He had but eight or nine thousand men, and no money to pay even this little force. The soldiers were perishing daily, and nearly all the survivors were described by their chief as sick or maimed. The famine in the obedient provinces was universal, the whole population was desperate with hunger; and the merchants, frightened by Drake's successes, and appalled by the ruin all around them, drew their purse-strings inexorably.³ "I know not to what saint to devote myself," said Alexander.⁴ He had been compelled, by the movement before Grave, to withdraw Haultepenne from the projected enterprise against Neuss, and he was quite aware of the cheerful view which Leicester was inclined to take of their relative positions. "The English think they are going to do great things," said he, "and consider themselves masters of the field."⁵

Nevertheless, on the 11th May the dejected, melancholy man had left Brussels and joined his little army, consisting of three thousand Spaniards and five thousand of all other nations.⁶ His veterans, though unpaid, ragged, and half starved, were in raptures to have their idolized

¹ Leye. Corresp., 251, April 30 (May 10), 1586.

² Ibid.

³ "Cierran la bolsa."—Parma to Philip II., May 9, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

⁴ Same to same, April 27, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

⁵ Letter of May 9, MS.

⁶ Parma to Philip II., May 27, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

commander among them again, and vowed that under his guidance there was nothing which they could not accomplish. The king's honor, his own, that of the army, all were pledged to take the city. On the success of that enterprise, he said, depended all his past conquests, and every hope for the future. Leicester and the English, whom he called the head and body of the rebel forces, were equally pledged to relieve the place, and were bent upon meeting him in the field.¹ The earl had taken some forts in the Batavia,—Betuwe, or "Good Meadow," which he pronounced as fertile and about as large as Herefordshire,²—and was now threatening Nimwegen, a city which had been gained for Philip by the last effort of Schenck on the royalist side. He was now observing Alexander's demonstrations against Grave, but, after the recent success in victualing that place, he felt a just confidence in its security.

On the 31st May the trenches were commenced, and on the 5th June the batteries were opened. The work went rapidly forward when Farnese was in the field. "The Prince of Parma doth batter it like a prince,"³ said Lord North, admiring the enemy with the enthusiasm of an honest soldier. On the 6th of June, as Alexander rode through the camp to reconnoiter, previous to an attack, a well-directed cannon-ball carried away the hinder half of his horse.⁴ The prince fell to the ground, and, for a moment, dismay was in the Spanish ranks. At the next instant, though somewhat bruised, he was

¹ Parma to Philip II., May 27 and June 11, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

² Leicester to the queen, May 27, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ North to Burghley, May 29, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

⁴ Stow, 718. Strada, ii. 416.

on his feet again, and, having found the breach sufficiently promising, he determined on the assault.

As a preliminary measure, he wished to occupy a tower which had been battered nearly to ruins, situate near the river. Captain de Solis was ordered, with sixty veterans, to take possession of this tower, and to "have a look at the countenance of the enemy, without amusing himself with anything else."¹ The tower was soon secured, but Solis, in disobedience to his written instructions,² led his men against the ravelin, which was still in a state of perfect defense. A musket-ball soon stretched him dead beneath the wall, and his followers, still attempting to enter the impracticable breach, were repelled by a shower of stones and blazing pitch-hoops. Hot sand, too, poured from sieves and baskets, insinuated itself within the armor of the Spaniards, and occasioned such exquisite suffering that many threw themselves into the river to allay the pain. Emerging refreshed, but confused, they attempted in vain to renew the onset. Several of the little band were slain, the assault was quite unsuccessful, and the trumpet sounded a recall.³ So completely discomfited were the Spaniards by this repulse, and so thoroughly at their ease were the besieged, that a soldier let himself down from the ramparts of the town for the sake of plundering the body of Captain Solis, who was richly dressed, and, having accomplished this feat, was quietly helped back again by his comrades from above.⁴

To the surprise of the besiegers, however, on the very

¹ Parma to Philip II., June 11, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

² Ibid.

³ Strada, ii. 417. Bor, ii. 707, 708.

⁴ Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 288.

next morning came a request from the governor of the city, Baron Hemart, to negotiate for a surrender. Alexander was, naturally, but too glad to grant easy terms, and upon the 7th of June the garrison left the town with colors displayed and drums beating, and the Prince of Parma marched into it at the head of his troops. He found a year's provision there for six thousand men, while, at the same time, the walls had suffered so little that he must have been obliged to wait long for a practicable breach.¹

“There was no good reason even for women to have surrendered the place,” exclaimed Leicester, when he heard the news.² And the earl had cause to be enraged at such a result. He had received a letter only the day before, signed by Hemart himself and by all the officers in Grave, asserting their determination and ability to hold the place for a good five months, or for an indefinite period, and until they should be relieved. And indeed all the officers, with three exceptions, had protested against the base surrender. But at the bottom of the catastrophe, of the disastrous loss of the city and the utter ruin of young Hemart, was a woman. The governor was governed by his mistress, a lady of good family in the place, but of Spanish inclinations, and she, for some mysterious reasons, had persuaded him thus voluntarily to capitulate.³

Parma lost no time, however, in exulting over his suc-

¹ Strada, ii. 418. Bor, ii. 707, 708. Parma to Philip II., May 27 and June 11, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS. North to Burghley, May 29 (June 8), 1586, S. P. Office MS. Leicester to the queen, June 6 (16), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 288.

³ Meteren, xiii. 235. Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 299-310. Strada,

cess. Upon the same day the towns of Meghen and Batenburg surrendered to him, and immediately afterward siege was laid to Venlo, a town of importance, lying thirty miles farther up the Meuse. The wife and family of Martin Schenck were in the city, together with two hundred horses, and from forty to one hundred thousand crowns in money, plate, and furniture belonging to him.¹

That bold partizan, accompanied by the mad Welshman Roger Williams, at the head of one hundred and thirty English lances and thirty of Schenck's men, made a wild nocturnal attempt to cut their way through the besieging force and penetrate to the city. They passed through the enemy's lines, killed all the corps de garde and many Spanish troopers,—the terrible Martin's own hand being most effective in this midnight slaughter,—and reached the very door of Parma's tent, where they killed his secretary and many of his guards. It was

ii. 418. Leicester to the queen, June 6 (16), 1586, S. P. Office MS. North to Burghley, June 16 (26), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

"The governor, Hemart," said North, "is a gentleman of Gelder, of great kindred, living, and acquaintance. There be many vehement presumptions to argue a treacherous practice with the enemy. The best that can be made of it was most vile cowardice, mixed with such negligence as is unspeakable. In the time of that siege he spent his time in his house, followed with his harlot, and when he came abroad he could not be gotten by entreaty of captains, burghers, or soldiers to do anything for the defense of the town, but straightway entered into a contenance of the people, wishing rather to give up the town than suffer the blood of so many innocents to be spilled, which purpose he did prosecute with speed, and sent a drum to the enemy for parley. The town was impossible to be assaulted," etc.

¹ North to Burghley, June 26 (July 6), 1586, S. P. Office MS. T. Doyley to Burghley, June 24 (July 4), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

even reported, and generally believed, that Farnese himself had been in imminent danger, that Schenck had fired his pistol at him unsuccessfully, and had then struck him on the head with its butt-end, and that the prince had only saved his life by leaping from his horse and scrambling through a ditch.¹ But these seem to have been fables. The alarm at last became general, the dawn of a summer's day was fast approaching, the drums beat to arms, and the bold marauders were obliged to effect their retreat as they best might, hotly pursued by near two thousand men. Having slain many of the Spanish army and lost nearly half their own number, they at last obtained shelter in Wachtendonk.²

Soon afterward the place capitulated, without waiting for a battery, upon moderate terms. Schenck's wife was sent away courteously with her family, in a coach and four, and with as much "apparel" as might be carried with her. His property was confiscated, for "no fair wars could be made with him."³

Thus, within a few weeks after taking the field, the "dejected, melancholy" man who was so "out of courage," and the soldiers who were so "marvelously beginning to run away," according to the Earl of Leicester, had swept their enemy from every town on the Meuse. That river was now, throughout its whole course, in the power of the Spaniards. The province of Brabant be-

¹ North to Burghley, June 16 (26), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² *Ibid.* Meteren, xiii. 235. Doyley to Burghley, June 24 (July 4), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ Doyley to Burghley, *ubi sup.* Leicester to the queen, June 26 (July 6), 1586, S. P. Office MS. North to Burghley, same date, S. P. Office MS. Parma to Philip II., July 8, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS. Compare Strada, ii. 423; Meteren, xiii. 235.

came thoroughly guarded again by its foss, and the enemy's road was opened into the northern provinces.

Leicester, meantime, had not distinguished himself. It must be confessed that he had been sadly outgeneraled. The man who had talked of following the enemy inch by inch, and who had pledged himself not only to protect Grave, and any other place that might be attacked, but even to recover Antwerp and Bruges within a few weeks, had wasted the time in very desultory operations. After the St. George feasting, Knewstubs sermons, and forces of Hercules were all finished, the earl had taken the field with five thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse. His intention was to clear the Yssel by getting possession of Doesburg and Zutphen, but, hearing of Parma's demonstrations upon Grave, he abandoned the contemplated siege of those cities, and came to Arnheim. He then crossed the Rhine into the isle of Batavia, and thence, after taking a few sconces of inferior importance,—while Schenck, meanwhile, was building on the island of Gravenweert, at the bifurcation of the Rhine and Waal, the sconce so celebrated a century later as "Schenck's Fort" (Schenckenschans),—he was preparing to pass the Waal in order to attack Farnese, when he heard, to his astonishment, of the surrender of Grave.¹

He could therefore, to his chagrin, no longer save that important city, but he could, at least, cut off the head of the culprit. Leicester was in Bommel when he heard of Baron Hemart's faint-heartedness or treachery, and his wrath was extravagant in proportion to the exultation with which his previous success had inspired him. He breathed nothing but revenge against the

¹ Meteren, xiii. 235°.

coward and the traitor who had delivered up the town in "such lewd and beastly sort."¹

"I will never depart hence," he said, "till by the goodness of God I be satisfied someway of this villain's treachery."² There could be little doubt that Hemart deserved punishment. There could be as little that Leicester would mete it out to him in ample measure. "The lewd villain who gave up Grave," said he, "and the captains as deep in fault as himself, shall all suffer together."³

Hemart came boldly to meet him. "The honest man came to me at Bommel," said Leicester, and he assured the government that it was in the hope of persuading the magistrates of that and other towns to imitate his own treachery.⁴

But the magistrates straightway delivered the culprit to the governor-general, who immediately placed him under arrest. A court martial was summoned, 26th of June, at Utrecht, consisting of Hohenlo, Essex, and other distinguished officers. They found that the conduct of the prisoner merited death, but left it to the earl to decide whether various extenuating circumstances did not justify a pardon.⁵ Hohenlo and Norris exerted themselves to procure a mitigation of the young man's sentence, and they excited thereby the governor's deep indignation. Norris, according to Leicester, was in love with the culprit's aunt, and was therefore especially

¹ Leicester to the queen, June 6 (16), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 285.

³ *Ibid.*, 287.

⁴ Leicester to the queen, MS. before cited.

⁵ North to Burghley, June 16 (26), 1586, S. P. Office MS. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 156.

desirous of saving his life.¹ Moreover, much use was made of the discredit which had been thrown by the queen on the earl's authority, and it was openly maintained that, being no longer governor-general, he had no authority to order execution upon a Netherland officer.²

The favorable circumstances urged in the case were that Hemart was a young man, without experience in military matters, and that he had been overcome by the supplications and outcries of the women, panic-stricken after the first assault. There were no direct proofs of treachery, or even of personal cowardice. He begged hard for a pardon, not on account of his life, but for the sake of his reputation. He earnestly implored permission to serve under the Queen of England, as a private soldier, without pay, on land or sea, for as many years as she should specify, and to be selected for the most dangerous employments, in order that, before he died, he might wipe out the disgrace which, through his fault, in an hour of weakness, had come upon an ancient and honorable house.³ Much interest was made for him, his family connection being powerful, and a general impression prevailing that he had erred through folly rather than deep guilt. But Leicester, beating himself upon the breast, as he was wont when excited, swore that there should be no pardon for such a traitor.⁴ The states of Holland and Zealand, likewise, were decidedly in favor of a severe example.⁵

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 301, 310, 313.

² Leicester to the queen, June 14 (24), 1586, S. P. Office MS. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 156. Meteren, xiii. 235^{vo}.

⁴ Hoofd, ubi sup.

⁵ Resol. Holl., June 24 and July 1, 1586, bl. 220. Wagenaer, viii. 128.

Hemart was accordingly led to the scaffold on the 28th June. He spoke to the people with great calmness, and, in two languages, French and Flemish, declared that he was guiltless of treachery, but that the terror and tears of the women, in an hour of panic, had made a coward of him.¹ He was beheaded standing. The two captains, Du Ban and Koeboekum, who had also been condemned, suffered with him.² A third captain, likewise convicted, was, "for very just cause," pardoned by Leicester.³ The earl persisted in believing that Hemart had surrendered the city as part of a deliberate plan, and affirmed that in such a time, when men had come to think no more of giving up a town than of abandoning a house, it was highly necessary to afford an example to traitors and satisfaction to the people.⁴ And the people were thoroughly satisfied, according to the governor, and only expressed their regret that three or four members of the States-General could not have their heads cut off as well, being as arrant knaves as Hemart; "and so I think they be," added Leicester.⁵

Parma, having thus made himself master of the Meuse, lost no time in making a demonstration upon the parallel course of the Rhine, thirty miles farther east.⁶ Schenck, Kloet, and other partizans kept that portion of the archiepiscopate and of Westphalia in a state of perpetual commotion.⁷ Early in the preceding year Count

¹ Hoofd, Meteren, Wagenaer, ubi sup.

² Ibid.

³ Leicester to Burghley, June 18 (28), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

⁴ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 309 seq.

⁵ Leicester to the queen, June 14 (24), 1586. Same to Burghley, June 18 (28), 1586. S. P. Office MSS.

⁶ Parma to Philip II., July 8, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

⁷ Wagenaer, viii. 131. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 154.

de Meurs had, by a fortunate stratagem, captured the town of Neuss for the deposed elector, and Hermann Kloet, a young and most determined Gueldrian soldier, now commanded in the place.¹

The Elector Ernest had made a visit in disguise to the camp of Parma, and had represented the necessity of recovering the city. It had become the stronghold of heretics, rebels, and banditti. The Rhine was in their hands, and with it the perpetual power of disturbing the loyal Netherlands. It was as much the interest of his Catholic Majesty as that of the archbishop that Neuss should be restored to its lawful owner. Parma had felt the force of this reasoning, and had, early in the year, sent Haultepenne to invest the city. He had been obliged to recall that commander during the siege of Grave. The place being reduced, Alexander, before the grass could grow beneath his feet, advanced to the Rhine in person. Early in July he appeared before the walls of Neuss with eight thousand foot and two thousand horse. The garrison under Kloet numbered scarcely more than sixteen hundred effective soldiers,² all Netherlanders and Germans, none being English.

The city is twenty miles below Cologne. It was so well fortified that a century before it had stood a year's siege from the famous Charles the Bold, who, after all, had been obliged to retire.³ It had also resisted the strenuous efforts of Charles V.,⁴ and was now stronger than it ever had been. It was thoroughly well provisioned, so that it was safe enough "if those within it," said Leicester, "be men."⁵ The earl expressed the

¹ Strada, ii. 425. Wagenaer, viii. 132.

² Strada, etc., MS. just cited.

³ Meteren, xiii. 235^{vo}.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 250,

opinion, however, that "those fellows were not good to defend towns, unless the besiegers were obliged to swim to the attack."¹ The issue was to show whether the sarcasm were just or not. Meantime the town was considered by the governor-general to be secure, "unless towns were to be had for the asking."²

Neuss is not immediately upon the Rhine, but that river, which sweeps away in a northeasterly direction from the walls, throws out an arm which completely encircles the town. A part of the place, cut into an island by the Erpt, was strengthened by two redouts. This island was abandoned, as being too weak to hold, and the Spaniards took possession of it immediately.³ There were various preliminary and sanguinary sorties and skirmishes, during which the Spaniards, after having been once driven from the island, again occupied that position. Archbishop Ernest came into the camp, and, before proceeding to a cannonade, Parma offered to the city certain terms of capitulation, which were approved by that prelate. Kloet replied to this proposal that he was wedded to the town and to his honor, which were as one. These he was incapable of sacrificing, but his life he was ready to lay down.⁴ There was, through some misapprehension, a delay in reporting this answer to Farnese. Meantime that general became impatient, and advanced to the battery of the Italian regiment. Pretending to be a plenipotentiary from the commander-in-chief, he expostulated in a loud voice at the slowness of their counsels. Hardly had he begun to speak when

¹ Leicester to Burghley, July 20 (30), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Same to the queen, July 8 (18), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ Strada, ii. 430.

⁴ North to Burghley, July 26, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

a shower of balls rattled about him. His own soldiers were terrified at his danger, and a cry arose in the town that "Holofernese," as the Flemings and Germans were accustomed to nickname Farnese, was dead.¹ Strange to relate, he was quite unharmed, and walked back to his tent with dignified slowness and a very frowning face. It was said that this breach of truce had been begun by the Spaniards, who had fired first, and had been immediately answered by the town. This was hotly denied, and Parma sent Colonel Tassis with a flag of truce to the commander, to rebuke and to desire an explanation of this dishonorable conduct.²

The answer given, or imagined, was that Commander Kloet had been sound asleep, but that he now much regretted this untoward accident. The explanation was received with derision, for it seemed hardly probable that so young and energetic a soldier would take the opportunity to refresh himself with slumber at a moment when a treaty for the capitulation of a city under his charge was under discussion. This terminated the negotiation.³

A few days afterward the feast of St. James was celebrated in the Spanish camp, with bonfires and other demonstrations of hilarity. The townsmen are said to have desecrated the same holiday by roasting alive in the market-place two unfortunate soldiers who had been captured in a sortie a few days before, besides burning the body of the holy St. Quirinus, with other holy relics.⁴ The detestable deed was to be most horribly avenged.

¹ Hoofd, Vervolgh, 179. ² Strada, ii. 433. Hoofd, ubi sup.

³ Hoofd, Strada, ubi sup. Meteren, xiii. 236 seq.

⁴ Parma to Philip II., August 4, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS. Compare Strada, ii. 434.

There is no authority but that of Farnese for the statement of this horrible crime, but I feel it my duty to record it.

A steady cannonade from forty-five great guns was kept up from 2 A. M. of July 15 until the dawn of the following day, the cannoneers being all provided with milk and vinegar to cool the pieces.¹ At daybreak the assault was ordered. Eight separate attacks were made with the usual impetuosity of Spaniards, and were steadily repulsed.² At the ninth the outer wall was carried, and the Spaniards, shouting "Santiago!" poured over it, bearing back all resistance. An Italian Knight of the Sepulcher, Cesar Guidiccioni by name, and a Spanish ensign, one Alfonso de Mesa, with his colors in one hand and a ladder in the other, each claimed the honor of having first mounted the breach. Both being deemed equally worthy of reward, Parma, after the city had been won, took from his own cap a sprig of jewels and a golden wheat-ear ornamented with a gem, which he had himself worn in place of a plume, and thus presented each with a brilliant token of his regard.³ The wall was then strengthened against the inner line of fortification, and all night long a desperate conflict was maintained in the dark upon the narrow space between the two barriers. Before daylight Kloet, who then, as always, had led his men in the most desperate adventures, was carried into the town, wounded in five places, and with his leg almost severed at the thigh.⁴ "'T is the bravest man," said the enthusiastic Lord North, "that was ever heard of in the world."⁵ "He is but a boy," said Alexander Farnese, "but a commander of extraordinary capacity and valor."⁶

¹ North to Burghley, July 26, 1586, S. P. Office MS. ² Ibid.

³ Strada, ii. 435. ⁴ Ibid., 436. North to Burghley, MS.

⁵ North to Burghley, MS.

⁶ Parma to Philip II., August 4, 1586, MS.

Early in the morning, when this mishap was known, an officer was sent to the camp of the besiegers to treat. The soldiers received him with furious laughter, and denied him access to the general. "Commander Kloet had waked from his nap at a wrong time," they said, "and the Prince of Parma was now sound asleep, in his turn."¹ There was no possibility of commencing a negotiation. The Spaniards, heated by the conflict, maddened by opposition, and inspired by the desire to sack a wealthy city, overpowered all resistance. "My little soldiers were not to be restrained,"² said Farnese, and so compelling a reluctant consent on the part of the commander-in-chief to an assault, the Italian and Spanish legions poured into the town at two opposite gates, which were no longer strong enough to withstand the enemy. The two streams met in the heart of the place, and swept every living thing in their path out of existence. The garrison was butchered to a man, and subsequently many of the inhabitants—men, women, and children—also, although the women, to the honor of Alexander, had been at first secured from harm in some of the churches, where they had been ordered to take refuge. The first blast of indignation was against the commandant of the place. Alexander, who had admired his courage, was not unfavorably disposed toward him, but Archbishop Ernest vehemently demanded his immediate death, as a personal favor to himself.³ As the

¹ Strada, ii. 437.

² Parma to Philip II., August 4, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

³ The Jesuit Strada (ii. 438) is the authority for the statement, founded upon Alexander's own letters, more of which were before him than can now be found in any single collection of documents. I have noticed very few of the Simancas letters relating to Farnese that do not seem to have been at Strada's disposal, although, of

churchman was nominally sovereign of the city, although in reality a beggarly dependent on Philip's alms, Farnese felt bound to comply. The manner in which it was at first supposed that the bishop's Christian request had been complied with sent a shudder through every heart in the Netherlands. "They took Kloet, wounded as he was," said Lord North, "and first strangled him, then smeared him with pitch, and burned him with gunpowder; thus, with their holiness, they made a tragical end of an heroic service. It is wondered that the prince would suffer so great an outrage to be done to so noble a soldier, who did but his duty."¹

But this was an error. A Jesuit priest² was sent to the house of the commandant, for a humane effort was thought necessary in order to save the soul of the man whose life was forfeited for the crime of defending his city. The culprit was found lying in bed. His wife, a woman of remarkable beauty,³ with her sister, was in at-

course, he only gives a very brief epitome of them in the Latin language, while he has used many others of which there are no copies at Simancas.

¹ North to Burghley, July 26 (August 5), 1586, S. P. Office MS. Leicester's account was still more horrible. "After Kloet was brought to the market-place," he wrote to Walsingham, "being sore wounded before, they laid him upon a table and bound him, and anointed him with tar all over his body, and *half strangling* him, burned him cruelly."—Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 369, July 29 (August 8), 1586.

Other English letters described the fate of the commandant in a similar manner, but the crime, although odious, was not quite so atrocious as it was at first believed to be.

² "Ad quem lecto jaentum misso Societatis Jesu sacerdote, cujus operâ in eo saltem mortis articulo â secunda se morte præriperat," etc.—Strada, ii. 438.

³ Ibid., MS. last cited.

tendance upon him. The spectacle of those two fair women nursing a wounded soldier fallen upon the field of honor might have softened devils with sympathy. But the Jesuit was closely followed by a band of soldiers, who, notwithstanding the supplications of the women, and the demand of Kloet to be indulged with a soldier's death, tied a rope round the commandant's neck, dragged him from his bed, and hanged him from his own window. The Calvinist clergyman Fossierus of Oppenheim, the deacons of the congregation, two military officers, and, said Parma, "forty other rascals," were murdered in the same way at the same time.¹ The bodies remained at the window till they were devoured by the flames which soon consumed the house. For a vast conflagration—caused none knew whether by accident, by the despair of the inhabitants, by the previous arrangements of the commandant, by the latest-arrived bands of the besiegers, enraged that the Italians and Spaniards had been beforehand with them in the spoils, or, as Farnese more maturely believed, by the special agency of the Almighty, offended with the burning of St. Quirinus²—now came to complete the horror of the scene. Three quarters of the town were at once in a blaze. The churches where the affrighted women had been cowering during the sack and slaughter were soon on fire, and now, amid the crash of falling houses and the uproar of the drunken soldiery, those unhappy victims were seen flitting along the flaming streets, seeking

¹ "Se ahorcaron con el comandante, el ministro, los consistoriantes, y quaranta otros vellacos," etc.—Parma to Philip II., August 4, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS. Compare Strada, ii. 438; Meteren, xiii. 236; Hoofd, Vervolgh, 179, 180; Bor, ii. 738.

² Strada, ii. 441, 442.

refuge against the fury of the elements in the more horrible cruelty of man. The fire lasted all day and night, and not one stone would have been left upon another had not the body of a second saint, saved on a former occasion from the heretics by the piety of a citizen, been fortunately deposited in his house. At this point the conflagration was stayed, for the flames refused to consume these holy relics;¹ but almost the whole of the town was destroyed, while at least four thousand people, citizens and soldiers, had perished by sword or fire.²

Three hundred survivors of the garrison took refuge in a tower. Its base was surrounded, and after brief parley they descended as prisoners. The prince and Haultepenne attempted in vain to protect them against the fury of the soldiers, and every man of them was instantly put to death.³

The next day Alexander gave orders that the wife and sister of the commandant should be protected,—for they had escaped, as if by miracle, from all the horrors of that day and night,—and sent, under escort, to their friends.⁴ Neuss had nearly ceased to exist, for, according to contemporaneous accounts, but eight houses had escaped destruction.⁵

¹ Strada, ii. 440.

² Ibid., ii. 442.

³ Ibid., ii. 439.

⁴ Ibid., ii. 438.

⁵ Bor, ii. 738. Stow, 734. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 179, 180. Meteren, xiii. 236 seq. Strada, ii. 436–442. Parma to Philip II., August 4, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

North to Burghley, July 26 (August 5), 1586. Same to same, August 12 (22), 1586. Leicester to Burghley, July 29 (August 8). T. Cecil to same, July 21 (31). B. Clerk to same, July 24 (August 3). W. Knollys to same, August 1 (11). T. Doyley to same, August 8 (18). S. P. Office MSS.

And the reflection was most painful to Leicester and to every generous Englishman or Netherlander in the country that this important city and its heroic defenders might have been preserved, but for want of harmony and want of money.¹ Twice had the earl got together a force of four thousand men for the relief of the place, and twice had he been obliged to disband them again for the lack of funds to set them in the field. He had pawned his plate and other valuables,² exhausted his credit, and had nothing for it but to wait for the queen's tardy remittances and to wrangle with the states; for the leaders of that body were unwilling to accord large supplies to a man who had become personally suspected by them and was the representative of a deeply suspected government. Meanwhile one third at least of the money which really found its way from time to time out of England was filched from the "poor, starved

¹ Sir Thomas Cecil, eldest son of the lord treasurer, was then governor of the cautionary town of Brill. It had been proposed to him to change this government for that of Harlingen in Friesland, where Lord North was then installed. But Cecil observed that he was "resolved to keep the Brill still, as one that would rather keep a shrew he knoweth than a shrew he knoweth not." He was much disgusted with the perpetual discord which had succeeded the brief enthusiasm upon Leicester's arrival. The wrangling between Leicester and his officers, and between them all and the states, offended the young soldier so much that he was anxious to leave the Netherlands. "Bravely was Nuys defended by Kloet, but evil relieved by us," he wrote to his father. "Our affairs here be such as that which we conclude overnight is broke in the morning; we agree not one with another, but we are divided in many factions, so as if the enemy were as strong as we are factious and irresolute, I think we should make shipwreck of the cause this summer."—Sir T. Cecil to Lord Burghley, July 21 (31), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Leicester to Burghley, August 10 (20), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

wretches," as Leicester called his soldiers, by the dishonesty of Norris, uncle of Sir John and army treasurer. This man was growing so rich on his peculations, on his commissions, and on his profits from paying the troops in a depreciated coin, that Leicester declared the whole revenue of his own landed estates in England to be less than that functionary's annual income.¹ Thus it was difficult to say whether the "ragged rogues" of Elizabeth or the maimed and neglected soldiers of Philip were in the more pitiable plight.

The only consolation in the recent reduction of Neuss was to be found in the fact that Parma had only gained a position, for the town had ceased to exist, and in the fiction that he had paid for his triumph by the loss of *six thousand* soldiers, killed and wounded.² In reality not more than five hundred of Farnese's army lost their lives,³ and although the town, excepting some churches, had certainly been destroyed, yet the prince was now master of the Rhine as far as Cologne, and of the Meuse as far as Grave. The famine which pressed so sorely upon him might now be relieved, and his military communications with Germany be considered secure.

The conqueror now turned his attention to Rheinberg, twenty-five miles farther down the river.⁴

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 260, 264, 299, 303.

² Ibid., 363. "He has lost three thousand of his soldiers, and as many hurt" (!).—Leicester to Walsingham, July 27, 1586. "Of the enemy not less than three thousand slain," said North, July 26, MS. ubi sup. "The town is gone, clean burned to the ground," wrote Leicester to Burghley, "and to the number of four thousand *dead in the ditches*."—Letter of July 29 (August 8), MS. ubi sup.

³ North to Burghley, August 12 (22), MS.

⁴ Bor, Hoofd, Meteren, Strada, ubi sup.

Sir Philip Sydney had not been well satisfied by the comparative idleness in which, from these various circumstances, he had been compelled to remain. Early in the spring he had been desirous of making an attack upon Flanders by capturing the town of Steenberg. The faithful Roger Williams had strongly seconded the proposal. "We wish to show your Excellency," said he to Leicester, "that we are not sound asleep."¹ The Welshman was not likely to be accused of somnolence, but on this occasion Sydney and himself had been overruled. At a later moment, and during the siege of Neuss, Sir Philip had the satisfaction of making a successful foray into Flanders.

The expedition had been planned by Prince Maurice of Nassau, and was his earliest military achievement. He proposed carrying by surprise the city of Axel, a well-built, strongly fortified town on the southwestern edge of the great Schelde estuary, and very important from its position. Its acquisition would make the hold of the patriots and the English upon Sluis and Ostend more secure, and give them many opportunities of annoying the enemy in Flanders.

Early in July Maurice wrote to the Earl of Leicester, communicating the particulars of his scheme, but begging that the affair might be "very secretly handled" and kept from every one but Sydney. Leicester accordingly sent his nephew to Maurice, that they might consult together upon the enterprise and make sure "that there was no ill intent, there being so much treachery in the world."² Sydney found no treachery in young

¹ Williams to Leicester, February 17 (27), 1586, Brit. Mus., Galba, c. ix. p. 85, MS.

² Leicester to the queen, July 8 (18), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

Maurice, but only a noble and intelligent love of adventure, and the two arranged their plans in harmony.

Leicester then, in order to deceive the enemy, came to Bergen-op-Zoom, with five hundred men, where he remained two days, not sleeping a wink, as he averred, during the whole time. In the night of Tuesday, 16th of July, the five hundred English soldiers were despatched by water, under charge of Lord Willoughby, "who," said the earl, "would needs go with them." Young Hatton, too, son of Sir Christopher, also volunteered on the service, "as his first nursling."¹ Sydney had five hundred of his own Zealand regiment in readiness, and the rendezvous was upon the broad waters of the Schelde, opposite Flushing.² The plan was neatly carried out, and the united flotilla, in a dark, calm midsummer's night, rowed across the smooth estuary and landed at Ter Neuse, about a league from Axel. Here they were joined by Maurice with some Netherland companies, and the united troops, between two and three thousand strong, marched at once to the place proposed. Before two in the morning they had reached Axel, but found the moat very deep. Forty soldiers immediately plunged in, however, carrying their ladders with them, swam across, scaled the rampart, killed the guard, whom they found asleep in their beds, and opened the gates for their comrades. The whole force then marched in, the Dutch companies under Colonel Pyron being first, Lord Willoughby's men being second, and Sir Philip with his Zealanders bringing up the rear.³ The garrison, between

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 338.

² "Before Flushing, upon the water, that it might be less noted."—Leicester to the queen, MS. before cited.

³ Sir T. Cecil to Lord Burghley, July 8 (18), 1586, S. P. Office MS. Leicester, however, says: "My nephew Sydney, with his band,

five and six hundred in number, though surprised, resisted gallantly, and were all put to the sword. Of the invaders not a single man lost his life. Sydney most generously rewarded from his own purse the adventurous soldiers who had swum the moat, and it was to his care and intelligence that the success of Prince Maurice's scheme was generally attributed. The achievement was hailed with great satisfaction, and it somewhat raised the drooping spirits of the patriots after their severe losses at Grave and Venlo. "This victory hath happened in good time," wrote Thomas Cecil to his father, "and hath made us somewhat to lift up our heads."¹ A garrison of eight hundred, under Colonel Pyron, was left in Axel, and the dikes around were then pierced. Upward of two millions' worth of property in grass, cattle, corn, was thus immediately destroyed² in the territory of the obedient Netherlands.

After an unsuccessful attempt to surprise Gravelines,³ the governor of which place, the veteran La Motte, was not so easily taken napping, Sir Philip, having gained much reputation by this conquest of Axel, then joined the main body of the army, under Leicester, at Arnheim.⁴

would needs have the first entry, as the messenger told me" (letter to the queen, *ubi sup.*); but the messenger seems to have been mistaken.

¹ Cecil to Burghley, *ubi sup.*

² Leicester to Burghley, July 29 (August 8), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

"Your Lordship will not believe how the town of Axel is like to annoy these parts. There is already so much corn, cattle, and grass destroyed as is worth two millions of florins."

³ Meteren, xiii. 236^o.

⁴ Letters of Leicester and of Sir T. Cecil above cited. Compare Meteren, xiii. 236; Brooke's *Life of Sydney*, ii. 15; Hoofd, *Vervolgh*, 181, 182; Bor, ii. 738; Wagenaer, viii. 134; Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 337, 338.

Yet, after all, Sir Philip had not grown in favor with her Majesty during his service in the Low Countries. He had also been disappointed in the government of Zealand, to which post his uncle had destined him. The course of Leicester's ambition had been frustrated by the policy of Barneveldt and Buys, in pursuance of which Count or Prince Maurice—as he was now purposely designated, in order that his rank might surpass that of the earl¹—had become stadholder and captain-general both of Holland and Zealand. The earl had given his nephew, however, the colonelcy of the Zealand regiment, vacant by the death of Admiral Haultain on the Kowenstyn dike. This promotion had excited much anger among the high officers in the Netherlands, who, at the instigation of Count Hohenlo, had presented a remonstrance upon the subject to the governor-general. It had always been the custom, they said, with the late Prince of Orange, to confer promotion according to seniority, without regard to social rank, and they were therefore unwilling that a young foreigner who had just entered the service should thus be advanced over the heads of veterans who had been campaigning there so many weary years.² At the same time the gentlemen

¹ His elder brother, Philip William, son of William the Silent by his first wife, Anna de Buren, was Prince of Orange, but was still detained captive in Spain. The title of prince was given by courtesy to Maurice, on the ground that in Germany all the sons succeeded to the father's title. As the principality of Orange was not in Germany, and as the title of William in that country was only that of count, it was difficult to see any claim of Maurice to be entitled prince so long as his brother was alive. Leicester always considered his assumption of this superior rank as a personal affront to himself.

² Sydney to Davison, February 24, 1586, Brit. Mus., Galba,

who signed the paper protested to Sir Philip, in another letter, "with all the same hands," that they had no personal feeling toward him, but, on the contrary, that they wished him all honor.¹

Young Maurice himself had always manifested the most friendly feelings toward Sydney, although influenced in his action by the statesmen who were already organizing a powerful opposition to Leicester. "Count Maurice showed himself constantly kind in the matter of the regiment," said Sir Philip, "but Mr. Paul Buss has so many busses in his head, such as you shall find he will be to God and man about one pitch. Happy is the communication of them that join in the fear of God."² Hohenlo, too, or Hollock, as he was called by the French and English, was much governed by Buys and Olden-Barneveldt. Reckless and daring, but loose of life and uncertain of purpose, he was most dangerous, unless under safe guidance. Roger Williams, who vowed that, but for the love he bore to Sydney and Leicester, he would not remain ten days in the Netherlands, was much disgusted by Hohenlo's conduct in regard to the Zealand regiment. "'T is a mutinous request of Hollock," said he, "that strangers should not command Netherlanders. He and his Almaynes are farther born from Zealand than Sir Philip is. Either you must make Hollock assured to you, or you must disgrace him. If he will not be yours, I will show you means to disinherit him of all his commands at small danger. What service doth he, Count Solms, Count

c. ix. 75, MS. Compare letters of Hohenlo in Bor, iii. 123 seq.; Hoofd, Vervolgh, 156, 157; Wagenaer, viii. 129.

¹ Sydney to Davison, *ubi sup.*

² *Ibid.*

Overstein, with their Almaynes, but spend treasure and consume great contributions?"¹

It was very natural that the chivalrous Sydney, who had come to the Netherlands to win glory in the field, should be desirous of posts that would bring danger and distinction with them. He was not there merely that he might govern Flushing, important as it was, particularly as the garrison was, according to his statement, about as able to maintain the town "as the Tower was to answer for London." He disapproved of his wife's inclination to join him in Holland, for he was likely, so he wrote to her father, Walsingham, "to run such a course as would not be fit for any of the feminine gender."² He had been, however, grieved to the heart by the spectacle which was perpetually exhibited of the queen's parsimony and of the consequent suffering of the soldiers. Twelve or fifteen thousand Englishmen were serving in the Netherlands, more than two thirds of them in her Majesty's immediate employment. No troops had ever fought better, or more honorably maintained the ancient glory of England. But rarely had more ragged and wretched warriors been seen than they after a few months' campaigning.

The Irish kerns, some fifteen hundred of whom were among the auxiliaries, were better off, for they habitually dispensed with clothing, an apron from waist to knee being the only protection of these wild Celts, who fought with the valor and nearly in the costume of Homeric heroes. Fearing nothing, needing nothing, sparing nothing, they stalked about the fens of Zealand

¹ R. Williams to Leicester, February 17 (27), 1586, Brit. Mus., Galba, c. ix. 85, MS.

² Letters, in Gray's Life of Sydney, 291.

upon their long stilts, or leaped across running rivers, scaling ramparts, robbing the highways, burning, butchering, and maltreating the villages and their inhabitants, with as little regard for the laws of Christian warfare as for those of civilized costume.¹

Other soldiers, more sophisticated as to apparel, were less at their ease. The generous Sydney spent all his means, and loaded himself with debt, in order to relieve the necessities of the poor soldiers. He protested that if the queen would not pay her troops she would lose her troops, but that no living man should say the fault was in him. "What relief I can do them I will," he wrote to his father-in-law; "I will spare no danger, if occasion serves. I am sure that no creature shall lay injustice to my charge."²

Very soon it was discovered that the starving troops had to contend not only with the queen's niggardliness but with the dishonesty of her agents. Treasurer Norris was constantly accused by Leicester and Sydney of gross speculation. Five per cent., according to Sir Philip, was lost to the Zealand soldiers in every payment, "and God knows," he said, "they want no such hindrance, being scarce able to keep life with their entire pay. Truly it is but poor increase to her Majesty, considering what loss it is to the miserable soldier." Discipline and endurance were sure to be sacrificed, in the end, to such short-sighted economy. "When soldiers," said Sydney, "grow to despair, and give up towns, then it is too late to buy with hundred thousands what might have been saved with a trifle."³

This plain-dealing on the part of Sydney was any-

¹ Reyd, v. 101. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 220. Strada, ii. 446.

² Letters, in Gray, 290.

³ Ibid., 214, 321.

thing but agreeable to the queen, who was far from feeling regret that his high-soaring expectations had been somewhat blighted in the provinces. He often expressed his mortification that her Majesty was disposed to interpret everything to his disadvantage. "I understand," said he, "that I am called ambitious and very proud at home, but certainly, if they knew my heart, they would not altogether so judge me."¹ Elizabeth had taken part with Hohenlo against Sir Philip in the matter of the Zealand regiment, and in this perhaps she was not entirely to be blamed. But she inveighed needlessly against his ambitious seeking of the office, and, as Walsingham observed, "she was very apt, upon every light occasion, to find fault with him."² It is probable that his complaints against the army treasurer, and his manful defense of the "miserable soldiers," more than counterbalanced, in the queen's estimation, his chivalry in the field.

Nevertheless, he had now the satisfaction of having gained an important city in Flanders; and on subsequently joining the army under his uncle, he indulged the hope of earning still greater distinction.

Martin Schenck had meanwhile been successfully defending Rheinberg, for several weeks, against Parma's forces. It was necessary, however, that Leicester, notwithstanding the impoverished condition of his troops, should make some diversion while his formidable antagonist was thus carrying all before him.

He assembled, accordingly, in the month of August, all the troops that could be brought into the field, and reviewed them, with much ceremony, in the neighbor-

¹ Letters, in Gray, 290. Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 345.

² Letters, in Gray, just cited.

hood of Arnheim. His army barely numbered seven thousand foot and two thousand horse,¹ but he gave out very extensively that he had fourteen thousand under his command,² and he was, moreover, expecting a force of three thousand reiters and as many pikemen, recently levied in Germany. Lord Essex was general of the cavalry, Sir William Pelham³—a distinguished soldier, who had recently arrived out of England, after the most urgent solicitations to the queen, for that end, by Leicester—was lord marshal of the camp, and Sir John Norris was colonel-general of the infantry.

¹ Leicester to the queen, October 11, 1586, S. P. Office MS. Huddleston to Burghley, September 6, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Ibid. Compare Strada, who states the number of Leicester's forces at thirteen thousand foot and two thousand horse, besides reinforcements of one thousand English and Scotch, who were shortly expected. Bor, ii. 738. Wagenaer, viii. 135.

³ Sir William Pelham had been out of favor with the queen for many months. He had been held responsible for some abuses in the ordnance office, and a heavy claim made upon him by the crown had reduced him to insolvency. The queen was excessively indignant at his conduct, and refused for a long time to allow him to accept the responsible post under Leicester which the earl was anxious to confer upon him. Leicester, who was the most generous of men, sent him large sums of money to extricate him from his difficulties, but it was many months before the queen relented. The earl had an exalted opinion of Pelham's military capacity, knew him to be one of his own most devoted adherents, and earnestly desired his support to keep down the hostility and insubordination of Sir John Norris and his brothers. "I begin to be prettily accompanied now with men," he wrote to the queen, "only lacking governors and leaders, especially a marshal. I must still say to your Majesty it had been better to have wanted the use of twenty thousand than the service of Sir W. Pelham here thus long. It is not only an insufferable want to all our people, but the enemy hath bragged of it. I do assure your Majesty, by the allegiance I owe you,

After the parade, two sermons were preached upon the hillside to the soldiers, and then there was a council of war. It was decided, notwithstanding the earl's announcement of his intentions to attack Parma in person, that the condition of the army did not warrant such an enterprise. It was thought better to lay siege to Zutphen. This step, if successful, would place in the power of the Republic and her ally a city of great importance and strength. In every event the attempt would probably compel Farnese to raise the siege of Berg.

Leicester, accordingly, with "his brave troop of able

I know the Prince of Parma hath spoken it some months past, that he was sure neither Pelham nor the Lord Grey should come, *nor that any more men by your lieense or muster should pass, which falls out somewhat to be true, to our discomfort.* But if either Pelham or Lord Grey, or rather both, may come, I trust your Majesty shall reap the greatest honor and good by it, but, first, Sir William, for he is readiest. *For God's sake and your honor's sake, let him come.* We have now some numbers increased, but no man fit for such a government as Sir W. Pelham is. I beseech your Majesty, *trust me, and believe me there is not one, no, not one for it, whatsoever you have heard or may hear, or of whomsoever, that I know to be employed at this time here. I find it, I feel it,* to my great hindrance and no less danger every day. I know here be worthy and very valiant gentlemen; but for so great a charge, believe me, *there is not one yet here for it.* I am loath to hinder any man. It hath not been my custom to your Majesty. I beseech you that all men may have their deserts and your poor army here comforted. Let all the haste possible be used with Sir W. Pelham, on whose coming with that worthy gentleman, Sir W. Stanley, I trust your Majesty shall hear well of us," etc. It was natural that Sir John Norris should be indignant at being supplanted by Pelham, and their mutual rivalry did infinite mischief (Leicester to the queen, June 14 (24), 1586, S. P. Office MS. Compare Leye. Corresp., 37, 45, 55, 125).

and likely men,"¹ five thousand of the infantry being English,² advanced as far as Doesburg. This city, seated at the confluence of the ancient canal of Drusus and the Yssel, five miles above Zutphen, it was necessary, as a preliminary measure, to secure. It was not a very strong place, being rather slightly walled with brick, and with a foss drawing not more than three feet of water.³ By the 30th August it had been completely invested.

On the same night, at ten o'clock, Sir William Pelham came to the earl to tell him "what beastly pioneers the Dutchmen were." Leicester accordingly determined, notwithstanding the lord marshal's entreaties, to proceed to the trenches in person. There being but faint light, the two lost their way, and soon found themselves nearly at the gate of the town. Here, while groping about in the dark and trying to effect their retreat, they were saluted with a shot, which struck Sir William in the stomach. For an instant, thinking himself mortally injured, he expressed his satisfaction that he had been between the commander-in-chief and the blow, and made other "comfortable and resolute speeches." Very fortunately, however, it proved that the marshal was not seriously hurt, and after a few days he was about his work as usual, although obliged, as the Earl of Leicester expressed it, "to carry a bullet in his belly as long as he should live."⁴

Roger Williams, too, that valiant adventurer,—“but no more valiant than wise, and worth his weight in gold,” according to the appreciative Leicester,—was shot

¹ Huddleston to Burghley, MS. before cited.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 401, 407.

through the arm. For the dare-devil Welshman, much to the earl's regret, persisted in running up and down the trenches "with a great plume of feathers in his gilt morion," and in otherwise making a very conspicuous mark of himself "within point-blank of a caliver."¹

Notwithstanding these mishaps, however, the siege went successfully forward. Upon the 2d September the earl began to batter, and after a brisk cannonade, from dawn till two in the afternoon, he had considerably damaged the wall in two places. One of the breaches was eighty feet wide, the other half as large, but the besieged had stuffed them full of beds, tubs, logs of wood, boards, and "such like trash," by means whereof the ascent was not so easy as it seemed.² The soldiers were excessively eager for the assault. Sir John Norris came to Leicester to receive his orders as to the command of the attacking party. The earl referred the matter to him. "There is no man," answered Sir John, "fitter for that purpose than myself, for I am colonel-general of the infantry."³

But Leicester, not willing to indulge so unreasonable a proposal, replied that he would reserve him for service of less hazard and greater importance. Norris being, as usual, "*satis prodigus magnæ animæ*,"⁴ was out of humor at the refusal, and ascribed it to the earl's persistent hostility to him and his family. It was then arranged that the assault upon the principal breach should be led by younger officers, to be supported by Sir John and other veterans. The other breach was

¹ Bruce's *Leyce. Corresp.*, 401, 407.

² Huddleston to Burghley, September 6 (16), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

assigned to the Dutch and Scotch, black Norris scowling at them the while with jealous eyes, fearing that they might get the start of the English party and be first to enter the town.¹ A party of noble volunteers clustered about Sir John,—Lord Burgh, Sir Thomas Cecil, Sir Philip Sydney, and his brother Robert among the rest,—most impatient for the signal. The race was obviously to be a sharp one. The governor-general forbade these violent demonstrations, but Lord Burgh, “in a most vehement passion, waived the countermand,”² and his insubordination was very generally imitated. Before the signal was given, however, Leicester sent a trumpet to summon the town to surrender, and could with difficulty restrain his soldiers till the answer should be returned. To the universal disappointment, the garrison agreed to surrender. Norris himself then stepped forward to the breach, and cried aloud the terms, lest the returning herald, who had been sent back by Leicester, should offer too favorable a capitulation.³ It was arranged that the soldiers should retire without arms, with white wands in their hands, the officers remaining prisoners, and that the burghers, their lives and property, should be at Leicester’s disposal.⁴ The earl gave most peremptory orders that persons and goods should be respected, but his commands were disobeyed. Sir William Stanley’s men committed frightful disorders and thoroughly rifled the town.

¹ MS. last cited.

² *Ibid.*

³ “Lest the trumpet should offer too largely, I stepped to the breach myself and proposed the conditions,” etc.—Sir John Norris to Mr. Wilkes, September 6 (16), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

⁴ Leicester to the Privy Council, September 3 (13), 1586. Sir J. Norris to Wilkes, *ubi sup.*, S. P. Office MS.

“And because,” said Norris, “I found fault herewith, Sir William began to quarrel with me, hath braved me extremely, refuseth to take any direction from me, and although I have sought for redress, yet it is proceeded in so coldly that he taketh encouragement rather to increase the quarrel than to leave it.”¹

Notwithstanding, therefore, the decree of Leicester, the expostulations and anger of Norris, and the energetic efforts of Lord Essex and other generals, who went about smiting the marauders on the head, the soldiers sacked the city and committed various disorders, in spite of the capitulation.²

Doesburg having been thus reduced, the earl now proceeded toward the more important city which he had determined to besiege. Zutphen, or “South Fen,” an antique town of wealth and elegance, was the capital of the old landgraves of Zutphen. It is situate on the right bank of the Yssel, that branch of the Rhine which flows between Gelderland and Overyssel into the Zuyder Zee.

The ancient river, broad, deep, and languid, glides through a plain of almost boundless extent till it loses itself in the flat and misty horizon. On the other side

¹ Norris to Wilkes, MS.

² Huddleston to Burghley, September 3, 1586, S. P. Office MS. Leicester to Privy Council, September 6, 1586, S. P. Office MS. Sir John Norris to Wilkes, September 6, 1586, S. P. Office MS. Compare Hoofd, *Vervolgh*, 184; Bor, ii. 750; Stow, 736; Bruce's *Leye. Corresp.*, 406, 407.

The town was “rifled,” but it was “but poor, with nothing to answer the need and greediness of the soldiers,” said Huddleston, adding that “divers disorders were committed, as in such cases it happeneth, though, God be thanked, none specially notorious.”

of the stream, in the district called the Veluwe,¹ or "Bad Meadow," were three sconces, one of them of remarkable strength. An island between the city and the shore was likewise well fortified. On the landward side the town was protected by a wall and moat sufficiently strong in those infant days of artillery. Near the Hospital Gate, on the east, was an external fortress guarding the road to Warnsfeld. This was a small village, with a solitary slender church spire shooting up above a cluster of neat one-storied houses. It was about an English mile from Zutphen, in the midst of a wide, low, somewhat fenny plain, which in winter became so completely a lake that peasants were not unfrequently drowned in attempting to pass from the city to the village. In summer the vague expanse of country was fertile and cheerful of aspect. Long rows of poplars marking the straight highways, clumps of pollard willows scattered around the little meres, snug farm-houses with kitchen-gardens and brilliant flower-patches dotting the level plain, verdant pastures sweeping off into seemingly infinite distance, where the innumerable cattle seemed to swarm like insects, windmills swinging their arms in all directions, like protective giants, to save the country from inundation, the lagging sail of market-boats shining through rows of orchard trees—all gave to the environs of Zutphen a tranquil and domestic charm.

Deventer and Kampen, the two other places on the river, were in the hands of the states. It was therefore desirable for the English and the patriots, by gaining

¹ Veluwe, "Bad Meadow," in opposition to Betuwe (Batavia), "Good Meadow." "Bet" is the positive, now obsolete in German, Dutch, and English, of the comparative "better."

possession of Zutphen, to obtain control of the Yssel, driven as they had been from the Meuse and Rhine.

Sir John Norris, by Leicester's direction, took possession of a small rising ground, called "Gibbet Hill," on the land side, where he established a fortified camp and proceeded to invest the city. With him were Count William Louis of Nassau and Sir Philip Sydney, while the earl himself, crossing the Yssel on a bridge of boats which he had constructed, reserved for himself the reduction of the forts upon the Veluwe side.

Farnese, meantime, was not idle, and Leicester's calculations proved correct. So soon as the prince was informed of this important demonstration of the enemy he broke up, after brief debate with his officers, his camp before Rheinberg, and came to Wesel.¹ At this place he built a bridge over the Rhine, and fortified it with two blockhouses. These he placed under command of Claude Berlot, who was ordered to watch strictly all communication up the river with the city of Rheinberg, which he thus kept in a partially beleaguered state. Alexander then advanced rapidly by way of Groll and Burik, both which places he took possession of, to the neighborhood of Zutphen. He was determined, at every hazard, to relieve that important city; and although, after leaving necessary detachments on the way, he had but five thousand men under his command, besides fifteen hundred under Verdugo, making sixty-five hundred in all, he had decided that the necessity of the case and his own honor required him to seek the enemy, and to leave, as he said, the issue with the God of battles, whose cause it was.²

¹ Strada, ii. 448.

² Parma to Philip II., October 30, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

Tassis, lieutenant-governor of Gelderland, was ordered into the city with two cornets of horse and six hundred foot. As large a number had already been stationed there. Verdugo, who had been awaiting the arrival of the prince at Borkulo, a dozen miles from Zutphen, with four hundred foot and two hundred horse, now likewise entered the city.¹

On the night of the 29th August (St. Nov.) Alexander himself entered Zutphen for the purpose of encouraging the garrison by promise of relief, and of ascertaining the position of the enemy by personal observation. His presence, as it always did, inspired the soldiers with enthusiasm, so that they could with difficulty be restrained from rushing forth to assault the besiegers.² In regard to the enemy, he found that Gibbet Hill was still occupied by Sir John Norris, "the best soldier, in his opinion, that they had,"³ who had intrenched himself very strongly, and was supposed to have thirty-five hundred men under his command. His position seemed quite impregnable. The rest of the English were on the other side of the river, and Alexander observed, with satisfaction, that they had abandoned a small redout near the leper-house, outside the Loor Gate, through which the reinforcements must enter the city. The prince determined to profit by this mistake, and to seize the opportunity thus afforded of sending those much-needed supplies. During the night the enemy were found to be throwing up works "most furiously,"⁴ and skirmishing parties were sent out of the town to annoy them. In the darkness nothing of consequence was

¹ Parma to Philip II., MS. just cited. Compare Strada, ii. 448, 450.

² Letter to Philip II., *ubi sup.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.* : "a furia."

effected, but a Scotch officer was captured, who informed the Spanish commander that the enemy was fifteen thousand strong—a number which was nearly double that of Leicester's actual force. In the morning Alexander returned to his camp at Borkulo,—leaving Tassis in command of the Veluwe forts, and Verdugo in the city itself,—and he at once made rapid work in collecting victuals. He had soon wheat and other supplies in readiness, sufficient to feed four thousand mouths for three months, and these he determined to send into the city immediately, and at every hazard.

The great convoy which was now to be despatched required great care and a powerful escort. Twenty-five hundred musketeers and pikemen, of whom one thousand were Spaniards and six hundred cavalry, Epirotes, Spaniards, and Italians, under Hannibal Gonzaga, George Crescia, Bentivoglio, Sesa, and others, were accordingly detailed for this expedition.¹ The Marquis del Vasto, to whom was intrusted the chief command, was ordered to march from Borkulo at midnight on Wednesday, October 1 (St. Nov.). It was calculated that he would reach a certain hillock not far from Warnsfeld by dawn of day. Here he was to pause, and send forward an officer toward the town, communicating his arrival, and requesting the coöperation of Verdugo, who was to make a sortie with one thousand men, according to Alexander's previous arrangements. The plan was successfully carried out. The marquis arrived by daybreak at the

¹ These are Parma's own figures (letter to Philip as above). Every historian gives a different statement one from another. Leicester declared that Crescia told him, "upon his honor, that there were fifteen cornets of horse and three thousand foot" (Bruce's *Leyce. Corresp.*, 417).

spot indicated, and despatched Captain de Vega, who contrived to send intelligence of the fact. A trooper whom Parma had himself sent to Verdugo with earlier information of the movement had been captured on the way. Leicester had therefore been apprised, at an early moment, of the prince's intentions, but he was not aware that the convoy would be accompanied by so strong a force as had really been detailed.

He had accordingly ordered Sir John Norris, who commanded on the outside of the town near the road which the Spaniards must traverse, to place an ambuscade in his way. Sir John, always ready for adventurous enterprises, took a body of two hundred cavalry, all picked men, and ordered Sir William Stanley, with three hundred pikemen, to follow. A much stronger force of infantry was held in reserve and readiness, but it was not thought that it would be required. The ambuscade was successfully placed, before the dawn of Thursday morning,¹ in the neighborhood of Warnsfeld church. On the other hand, the Earl of Leicester himself, anxious as to the result, came across the river just at daybreak. He was accompanied by the chief gentlemen in his camp, who could never be restrained when blows were passing current.

The business that morning was a commonplace and practical, though an important, one,—to “impeach” a convoy of wheat and barley, butter, cheese, and beef,—but the names of those noble and knightly volunteers, familiar throughout Christendom, sound like the roll-call for some chivalrous tournament. There were Essex and Audley, Stanley, Pelham, Russell, both the Sydneys, all the Norrises, men whose valor had been proved on

¹ Thursday, September 22 (October 2), 1586.

many a hard-fought battle-field. There, too, was the famous hero of British ballad, whose name was so often to ring on the plains of the Netherlands—

The brave Lord Willoughby,
Of courage fierce and fell,
Who would not give one inch of way
For all the devils in hell.

Twenty such volunteers as these sat on horseback that morning around the stately Earl of Leicester. It seemed an incredible extravagance to send a handful of such heroes against an army.

But the English commander-in-chief had been listening to the insidious tongue of Rowland Yorke—that bold, plausible, unscrupulous partizan, already twice a renegade, of whom more was ere long to be heard in the Netherlands and England. Of the man's courage there could be no doubt, and he was about to fight that morning in the front rank at the head of his company. But he had, for some mysterious reason, been bent upon persuading the earl that the Spaniards were no match for Englishmen at a hand-to-hand contest. When they could ride freely up and down, he said, and use their lances as they liked, they were formidable. But the English were stronger men, better riders, better mounted, and better armed. The Spaniards hated helmets and proof-armor, while the English trooper, in casque, cuirass, and greaves, was a living fortress impregnable to Spanish or Italian light-horsemen. And Leicester seemed almost convinced by his reasoning.¹

¹ Reyd, v. 82, 83. Bor, ii. 750, 751. Compare Meteren, xiii. 237, who says that Yorke was suspected of being secretly in league with Farnese to contrive this ambushade. and thus to bring so

It was five o'clock of a chill autumn morning. It was time for day to break, but the fog was so thick that a man at the distance of five yards was quite invisible. The creaking of wagon-wheels and the measured tramp of soldiers soon became faintly audible, however, to Sir John Norris and his five hundred as they sat there in the mist. Presently came galloping forward in hot haste those nobles and gentlemen, with their esquires, fifty men in all,—Sydney, Willoughby, and the rest,—whom Leicester had no longer been able to restrain from taking part in the adventure.

A force of infantry, the amount of which cannot be satisfactorily ascertained, had been ordered by the earl to cross the bridge at a later moment. Sydney's cornet of horse was then in Deventer, to which place it had been sent in order to assist in quelling an anticipated revolt, so that he came, like most of his companions, as a private volunteer and knight errant.

The arrival of the expected convoy was soon more distinctly heard, but no scouts or outposts had been stationed to give timely notice of the enemy's movements.¹ Suddenly the fog, which had shrouded the scene so closely, rolled away like a curtain, and in the full light of an October morning the Englishmen found themselves face to face with a compact body of more than three thousand men. The Marquis del Vasto rode at the head of the force, surrounded by a band of mounted harquebusmen. The cavalry, under the famous Epirote chief many English nobles of distinction to death or captivity. There is no doubt that when he deserted the Spanish for the English party he pledged himself to Parma to do him good service, and that he was always secretly in league with the enemy. We shall see at a later day whether he was ready to redeem his pledge.

¹ Hoofd, Vervolgh, 186.

George Crescia, Hannibal Gonzaga, Bentivoglio, Sesa, Conti, and other distinguished commanders, followed; the columns of pikemen and musketeers lined the hedges on both sides the causeway; while between them the long train of wagons came slowly along under their protection.¹ The whole force had got in motion after having sent notice of their arrival to Verdugo, who, with one or two thousand men, was expected to sally forth almost immediately from the city gate.

There was but brief time for deliberation. Notwithstanding the tremendous odds there was no thought of retreat. Black Norris called to Sir William Stanley, with whom he had been at variance so lately at Doesburg.

"There hath been ill blood between us," he said. "Let us be friends together this day, and die side by side, if need be, in her Majesty's cause."

"If you see me not serve my prince with faithful courage now," replied Stanley, "account me forever a coward. Living or dying, I will stand or lie by you in friendship."

As they were speaking these words the young Earl of Essex, general of the horse, cried to his handful of troopers:

"Follow me, good fellows, for the honor of England and of England's queen!"²

As he spoke he dashed, lance in rest, upon the enemy's cavalry, overthrew the foremost man, horse and rider, shivered his own spear to splinters, and then, swinging his curtal-ax, rode merrily forward.³ His

¹ Parma to Philip II., October 30, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS. Compare Strada, ii. 450, 452; Bentivoglio, p. ii. l. iv. 311; Bor, ii. 750, 751.

² Archer, in Stow, 736.

³ Ibid.

whole little troop, compact as an arrow-head, flew with an irresistible shock against the opposing columns, pierced clean through them, and scattered them in all directions. At the very first charge one hundred English horsemen drove the Spanish and Albanian cavalry back upon the musketeers and pikemen. Wheeling with rapidity, they retired before a volley of musket-shot, by which many horses and a few riders were killed, and then formed again to renew the attack. Sir Philip Sydney, on coming to the field, having met Sir William Pelham, the veteran lord marshal, lightly armed, had with chivalrous extravagance thrown off his own cuishes, and now rode to the battle with no armor but his cuirass.¹ At the second charge his horse was shot under him, but, mounting another, he was seen everywhere in the thick of the fight, behaving himself with a gallantry which extorted admiration even from the enemy.

For the battle was a series of personal encounters in which high officers were doing the work of private soldiers. Lord North, who had been lying "bedrid" with a musket-shot in the leg, had got himself put on horseback, and, "with one boot on and one boot off," bore himself "most lustily" through the whole affair.² "I desire that her Majesty may know," he said, "that I live but to serve her. A better barony than I have could not hire the Lord North to live on meaner terms."³ Sir William Russell laid about him with his curtal-ax to such purpose that the Spaniards pronounced him a devil, and not a man. "Wherever," said an eye-witness, "he saw five or six of the enemy together, thither would he,

¹ Brooke's Sydney, ii. 31, 32.

² Archer, in Stow, ubi sup. Bruce's Leyc. Corresp., 417.

³ North to Burghley, May 29 (June 8), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

and with his hard knocks soon separated their friendship."¹ Lord Willoughby encountered George Crescia, general of the famed Albanian cavalry, unhorsed him at the first shock,² and rolled him into the ditch. "I yield me thy prisoner," called out the Epirote in French, "for thou art a *preux chevalier*," while Willoughby, trusting to his captive's word, galloped onward, and with him the rest of the little troop, till they seemed swallowed up by the superior numbers of the enemy. His horse was shot under him, his bases were torn from his legs, and he was nearly taken a prisoner, but fought his way back with incredible strength and good fortune. Sir William Stanley's horse had seven bullets in him, but bore his rider unhurt to the end of the battle. Leicester declared Sir William and "old Reade" to be "worth their weight in pearl."³

Hannibal Gonzaga, leader of the Spanish cavalry, fell mortally wounded.⁴ The Marquis del Vasto, commander of the expedition, nearly met the same fate. An Englishman was just cleaving his head with a battle-ax, when a Spaniard transfixed the soldier with his pike.⁵ The most obstinate struggle took place about the train

¹ Archer, in Stow, 737.

² Ibid. Leicester to Burghley, September, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ "I will leave no labor nor danger," said Lord North, "but serve as a private soldier, and have thrust myself for service on foot under Captain Reade, whom I find a noble and notable soldier."—North to Burghley, MS. last cited. This is the mettle the gallants of Elizabeth's court were made of. Compare Leyc. Corresp., 417.

⁴ "The Count Hannibal Gonzaga was killed with three others whose names we know not, but they had cassocks all embroidered and laced with silver and gold."—Leicester to Burghley, September, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

⁵ Strada, ii. 452.

of wagons. The teamsters had fled in the beginning of the action, but the English and Spanish soldiers, struggling with the horses, and pulling them forward and backward, tried in vain to get exclusive possession of the convoy which was the cause of the action.¹ The carts at last forced their way slowly nearer and nearer to the town, while the combat still went on, warm as ever, between the hostile squadrons. The action lasted an hour and a half, and again and again the Spanish horsemen wavered and broke before the handful of English, and fell back upon their musketeers. Sir Philip Sydney, in the last charge, rode quite through the enemy's ranks till he came upon their intrenchments, when a musket-ball from the camp struck him upon the thigh, three inches above the knee. Although desperately wounded in a part which should have been protected by the cuishes which he had thrown aside, he was not inclined to leave the field; but his own horse had been shot under him at the beginning of the action, and the one upon which he was now mounted became too restive for him, thus crippled, to control. He turned reluctantly away, and rode a mile and a half back to the intrenchments, suffering extreme pain, for his leg was dreadfully shattered. As he passed along the edge of the battle-field his attendants brought him a bottle of water to quench his raging thirst. At that moment a wounded English soldier, "who had eaten his last at the same feast," looked up wistfully in his face, when Sydney instantly handed him the flask, exclaiming, "Thy necessity is even greater than mine."² He then pledged his

¹ Strada, ii. 452.

² Brooke's Sydney, ii. 32. It is to be regretted that Lord Brooke does not give the authority for this beautiful and universally

dying comrade in a draught, and was soon afterward met by his uncle. "Oh, Philip," cried Leicester, in despair, "I am truly grieved to see thee in this plight." But Sydney comforted him with manful words, and assured him that death was sweet in the cause of his queen and country. Sir William Russell, too, all blood-stained from the fight, threw his arms around his friend, wept like a child, and kissing his hand, exclaimed, "Oh, noble Sir Philip, never did man attain hurt so honorably or serve so valiantly as you."¹ Sir William Pelham declared that "Sydney's noble courage in the face of our enemies had won him a name of continuing honor."²

The wounded gentleman was borne back to the camp, and thence in a barge to Arnheim. The fight was over. Sir John Norris bade Lord Leicester "be merry, for," said he, "you have had the honorablest day. A handful of men has driven the enemy three times to retreat."³ But, in truth, it was now time for the English to retire in their turn. Their reserve never arrived. The whole force engaged against the thirty-five hundred Spaniards had never exceeded two hundred and fifty horse and three hundred foot, and of this number the chief work had been done by the fifty or sixty volunteers and their

cherished anecdote. I have searched in vain for its confirmation through many contemporary letters and chronicles. There is no reason for rejecting its authenticity, but it would have been an exquisite pleasure to find it recorded, for instance, in a letter from Pelham or North or Norris or Leicester, all of whom speak of Sydney's gallantry in the action, but not one of whom was acquainted with or thought it worth while to mention the characteristic and touching trait.

¹ Stow, 737.

² Pelham to Walsingham, September 26 (October 6), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ Stow, ubi sup.

followers.¹ The heroism which had been displayed was fruitless, except as a proof—and so Leicester wrote to the Palatine John Casimir—“that Spaniards were not invincible.”² Two thousand men now sallied from the Loor Gate, under Verdugo and Tassis,³ to join the force under Vasto, and the English were forced to retreat. The whole convoy was then carried into the city, and the Spaniards remained masters of the field.⁴

Thirteen troopers and twenty-two foot-soldiers upon the English side were killed. The enemy lost perhaps two hundred men. They were thrice turned from their position, and thrice routed, but they succeeded at last in their attempt to carry their convoy into Zutphen. Upon

¹ Bruce's Leyc. Corresp., 417.

² Reyd, v. 83.

³ Parma to Philip, October 30, 1586, MS.

⁴ Ibid. Leicester observes in the letter to Burghley (September —, 1586, S. P. Office MS.) that, “notwithstanding all these troops, the prince did not put in one wagon, save thirty which got in in the night.” Alexander, however, states expressly the reverse, and congratulates Philip on the entire success of the undertaking :

“Pero nos debemos contentar con lo sucedido, pues allende de haber quedado la campaña por nosotros, y salido con nuestra pretension, y a la barba de tan buen numero con tanta poca gente (!) haber metido y sacado tanto carnage,” etc.—Letter to Philip, October 30, 1586, MS.

There can be no doubt whatever that the prince was entirely correct in his statement. The result proves it, if there could be any question of it before. It is difficult to see how Leicester could be mistaken, but he had a temptation to misrepresent an affair in which his own bad generalship had been as signal as the heroism which it had called forth. Certainly Zutphen, on that and the succeeding days, was thoroughly relieved. The errors, wilful or otherwise, as to the numbers engaged and respectively lost were greater on both sides than usual on such occasions, but this kind of misstatement has always been universal.

Compare Sydney Papers, i. 104, containing a letter of Leicester

that day and the succeeding ones the town was completely victualed. Very little, therefore, save honor, was gained by the display of English valor against overwhelming numbers—five hundred against near four thousand. Never in the whole course of the war had there been such fighting, for the troops upon both sides were picked men and veterans. For a long time afterward it was the custom of Spaniards and Netherlanders, in characterizing a hardly contested action, to call it as warm as the fight at Zutphen.¹

“I think I may call it,” said Leicester, “the most notable encounter that hath been in our age, and it will remain to our posterity famous.”²

to Heneage (I have not found the original); Strada, ii. 450, 452; Bor, ii. 750, 751; Stow, 737, 738; Hoofd, Vervolgh, 186, 187; Reyd, v. 83, 84; Meteren, xiii. 237; Bentivoglio, p. ii. l. iv. 311, et mult. al.

See also R. W. Tadama, *Geschiedenis der Stad Zutphen* (Arnhem en Zutphen, 1586), an interesting work, carefully written, and of great research, composed mainly from original unpublished documents. I desire to express my thanks to the learned author for the kindness with which he guided me over Zutphen and its neighborhood, pointing out everything connected with the battle and the siege.

¹ Strada, ii. 451.

² Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 416. “That Thursday may run amongst any of our Thursdays,” said the earl (*ibid.*, 430), adding, with a most ingenuous reference to himself: “In my former letters I forgot *one*, who not only on that day, but at every day's service, hath been a *principal actor himself*. *A tall, wise, rare servant he is*, as any I know, and of marvelous good government and judgment. That gentleman may take a great charge upon him, I warrant you.” Self-depreciation was not the earl's foible.

There is hardly a battle on record about which the accounts are so hopelessly conflicting as are those which relate to the battle of

Nevertheless, it is probable that the encounter would have been forgotten by posterity but for the melancholy close upon that field to Sydney's bright career. And perhaps the Queen of England had as much reason to blush for the incompetency of her general and favorite as to be proud of the heroism displayed by her officers and soldiers.

"There were too many indeed at this skirmish of the better sort," said Leicester; "only a two hundred and fifty horse, and most of them the best of this camp, and *unawares to me*. I was offended when I knew it, but could not fetch them back; but since they all so well Zutphen. The reason is obvious. The skirmish was a comparatively unimportant one. The fate of Sydney has invested it with undying interest, but it was not supposed at that time that he was mortally wounded. Lord North, whose letters are always spirited, went into the field in such a disabled condition that it was not in his power to send any account of the action, as he doubtless would otherwise have done, to Lord Burghley. Pelham, Norris, and Leicester are all meager on this occasion in details. Archer, in Stow, is fuller, but Parma in his letters to Philip, though copious, is confused. As a specimen of conflicting statistics it may be observed that the number of English actually engaged, according to the statement of the commander-in-chief to his government, was five hundred and fifty, horse and foot together. The Spanish, according to Farnese's letter to Philip, was about thirty-one hundred in all. Strada gives the same number, writing from other letters of Parma, and puts the English at *three thousand foot and four hundred horse*, exactly the same number that is given in the MS. letters of Simancas, and about seven times as many as were really in the field. Leicester puts the Spaniards at twelve hundred horse and three thousand foot—about one thousand more than the actual numbers. No doubt the numbers engaged on each side should be taken as correctly stated by the respective generals. There were therefore about thirty-one hundred Spaniards to five hundred and fifty English.

Leicester gives the number of killed and wounded as thirty-

escaped (save my dear nephew), I would not for ten thousand pounds but they had been there, since they have all won that honor they have. Your Lordship never heard of such desperate charges as they gave upon the enemies in the face of their muskets."¹

He described Sydney's wound as "very dangerous, the bone being broken in pieces," but said that the surgeons were in good hope. "I pray God to save his life," said the earl, "and I care not how lame he be." Sir Philip was carried to Arnheim, where the best surgeons were immediately in attendance upon him. He submitted to their examination and the pain which they inflicted with great cheerfulness, although himself persuaded that his wound was mortal. For many days the result was doubtful, and messages were sent day by day to England that he was convalescent—intelligence which was hailed by the queen and people as a matter not of private but of public rejoicing. He soon began to fail, however. Count Hohenlo was badly wounded a few days later before the great fort of Zutphen. A musket-ball entered his mouth, and passed through his cheek, carrying off a jewel which hung in his ear.² Notwithstanding his own

three English and from two hundred and fifty to three hundred and fifty Spaniards.

Parma states the number of Spaniards killed as nine (!), wounded twenty-nine, while he reports two hundred English killed.

It seems impossible that there could have been less than one hundred and fifty or two hundred Spaniards killed, which is not more than half the number claimed by Leicester on the authority of Spaniards themselves. But it is a waste of time to indulge in these fruitless calculations.

¹ Letter to Burghley, MS. before cited.

² Stow, 738. Bor, ii. 728.

critical condition, however, Hohenlo sent his surgeon, Adrian van den Spiegel, a man of great skill, to wait upon Sir Philip;¹ but Adrian soon felt that the case was hopeless. Meantime fever and gangrene attacked the count himself, and those in attendance upon him, fearing for his life, sent for his surgeon. Leicester refused to allow Adrian to depart, and Hohenlo, very generously acquiescing in the decree, but also requiring the surgeon's personal care, caused himself to be transported in a litter to Arnheim.²

Sydney was first to recognize the symptoms of mortification, which made a fatal result inevitable. His demeanor during his sickness and upon his death-bed was as beautiful as his life. He discoursed with his friends concerning the immortality of the soul, comparing the doctrines of Plato and of other ancient philosophers, whose writings were so familiar to him, with the revelations of Scripture and with the dictates of natural religion. He made his will with minute and elaborate provisions, leaving bequests, remembrances, and rings to all his friends. Then he indulged himself with music, and listened particularly to a strange song which he had himself composed during his illness, and which he had entitled "La Cuisse rompue." He took leave of the friends around him with perfect calmness, saying to his brother Robert: "Love my memory. Cherish my friends. Above all, govern your will and affections by the will and word of your Creator, in me beholding the end of this world, with all her vanities."³

And thus this gentle and heroic spirit took its flight. Parma, after thoroughly victualing Zutphen, turned

¹ Letter of Hohenlo, in Bor, iii. 123.

² *Ibid.*

³ Brooke's Sydney, ii. 32, 40. Sydney Papers, 104 seq.

his attention to the German levies which Leicester was expecting under the care of Count Meurs. "If the enemy is reinforced by these six thousand fresh troops," said Alexander, "it will make him master of the field."¹ And well he might hold this opinion, for, in the meager state of both the Spanish and the liberating armies, the addition of three thousand fresh reiters and as many infantry would be enough to turn the scale. The Duke of Parma—for, since the recent death of his father, Farnese had succeeded to his title²—determined in person to seek the German troops, and to destroy them if possible. But they never gave him the chance.³ Their muster-place was Bremen, but when they heard that the terrible "Holofernese" was in pursuit of them, and that the commencement of their service would be a pitched battle with his Spaniards and Italians, they broke up and scattered about the country. Soon afterward the duke tried another method of effectually dispersing them, in case they still retained a wish to fulfil their engagement with Leicester. He sent a messenger to treat with them, and in consequence two of their rittmeisters paid him a visit. He offered to give them higher pay, and "ready money in place of tricks and promises."⁴ The mercenary heroes listened very favor-

¹ Parma to Philip II., October 30, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS.

² Philip II. to Parma, October 19, 1586, Arch. de Sim. MS. "Henceforth," said the king, "I will be both father and mother to you."

³ Bentivoglio is much mistaken (p. ii. l. iv. 311) in giving an account of a pitched battle between Alexander and these mercenaries, in which they are represented as having been utterly defeated. The victory was quite bloodless, and it cost the victor only a couple of gold chains.

⁴ Parma to Philip II., October 30, 1586, MS. last cited.

ably to his proposals, although they had already received, besides the tricks and promises, at least one hundred thousand florins out of the states' treasury.¹

After proceeding thus far in the negotiation, however, Parma concluded, as the season was so far advanced, that it was sufficient to have dispersed them and to have deprived the English and patriots of their services. So he gave the two majors a gold chain apiece, and they went their way thoroughly satisfied. "I have got them away from the enemy for this year," said Alexander, "and this I hold to be one of the best services that has been rendered for many a long day to your Majesty."²

¹ Meteren, xiii. 236.

² Parma to Philip II, MS. last cited.

According to Meteren (*ubi sup.*), this mysterious dispersion of the German troops was owing to the intrigues of Leicester's English advisers, who were unwilling that he should send the money of the states anywhere but to England, and who, therefore, by their machinations, contrived to spirit away this auxiliary force just at the moment when, by its junction with his own army, the earl was about to have Farnese in his power. "From this time forth," says Meteren, "it was obvious that Leicester was governed entirely by English counsels," and so on. It has just been shown by the duke's private letters that the generally most accurate chronicler was mistaken in this instance, and that the deed was accomplished by Alexander's clever management alone. Some of the German princes in whose territories these levies had been made were honorably indignant at the treachery which had been thus practised on the states. Some of the officers were punished with imprisonment, degradation, and loss of nobility and armorial bearings, and the money paid as their *wartgeld* was sent back to Holland (*Le Petit, Grand Chronique*, ii. 536).

Reyd is still more severe. He maintains that Leicester withheld the pay which the states had furnished for these important levies, whose arrival at the time agreed upon would have changed the fortune of the war, and that he secretly prevented their coming, from a fear that they would adhere too closely to Hohenlo and

During the period which intervened between the action at Warnsfeld and the death of Sydney, the siege operations before Zutphen had been continued. The city, strongly garrisoned and well supplied with provisions, as it had been by Parma's care, remained impregnable, but the sconces beyond the river and upon the island fell into Leicester's hands.¹ The great fortress which commanded the Veluwe, and which was strong enough to have resisted Count Hohenlo on a former occasion for nearly a whole year, was the scene of much hard fighting. It was gained at last by the signal valor of Edward Stanley, lieutenant to Sir William. That officer, at the commencement of an assault upon a not very practicable breach, sprang at the long pike of a Spanish soldier, who was endeavoring to thrust him from the wall, and seized it with both hands. The Spaniard struggled to maintain his hold of the weapon, Stanley to wrest it from his grasp. A dozen other soldiers broke their pikes upon his cuirass or shot at him with their muskets. Conspicuous by his dress, being all in yellow but his corselet, he was in full sight of Leicester and of five thousand men. The earth was so shifty and sandy that

Count William Louis. Count Ysselstein, who had been sent by the earl to deal with these mercenaries and to promise their money, was furious at the treachery of which he conceived Leicester guilty, and did not scruple to say in large companies: "Leicester has done two great things in his life: he has made my old page, Martin Schenck, a knight, and myself a liar" (Reyd, *Nederl. Gesch.*, v. 85).

The suspicion, as we have seen, was quite groundless, and Ysselstein and the historian, who was private secretary to Count William Louis, very much mistaken.

¹ Strada, ii. 453, 454. Hoofd, *Vervolgh*, 188. Bor, ii. 752. Wagenaer, viii. 136.

the soldiers who were to follow him were not able to climb the wall. Still Stanley grasped his adversary's pike, but, suddenly changing his plan, he allowed the Spaniard to lift him from the ground. Then, assisting himself with his feet against the wall, he, much to the astonishment of the spectators, scrambled quite over the parapet, and dashed sword in hand among the defenders of the fort. Had he been endowed with a hundred lives it seemed impossible for him to escape death. But his followers, stimulated by his example, made ladders for themselves of each other's shoulders, clambered at last with great exertion over the broken wall, overpowered the garrison, and made themselves masters of the sconce. Leicester, transported with enthusiasm for this noble deed of daring, knighted Edward Stanley upon the spot, besides presenting him next day with forty pounds in gold and an annuity of one hundred marks sterling for life. "Since I was born, I did never see any man behave himself as he did," said the earl. "I shall never forget it, if I live a thousand year, and he shall have a part of my living for it as long as I live."¹

The occupation of these forts terminated the military operations of the year, for the rainy season, precursor of the winter, had now set in. Leicester, leaving Sir William Stanley, with twelve hundred English and Irish horse, in command of Deventer, Sir John Burrowes, with one thousand men, in Doesburg, and Sir Rowland Yorke, with one thousand more, in the great sconce before Zutphen, took his departure for The Hague.²

¹ Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 428. Compare Strada, ii. 455, 456; Hoofd, *Vervolgh*, 188; Meteren, xiii. 237, who says that Leicester presented Stanley with a life-rent of six hundred florins (sixty pounds).

² Bor, ii. 753.

Zutphen seemed so surrounded as to authorize the governor to expect ere long its capitulation. Nevertheless, the results of the campaign had not been encouraging. The states had lost ground, having been driven from the Meuse and Rhine, while they had with difficulty maintained themselves on the Flemish coast and upon the Yssel.

It is now necessary to glance at the internal politics of the Republic during the period of Leicester's administration, and to explain the position in which he found himself at the close of the year.

CHAPTER X

Should Elizabeth accept the sovereignty?—The effects of her anger—Quarrels between the earl and the states—The earl's three counselors—Leicester's finance chamber—Discontent of the mercantile classes—Paul Buys and the opposition—Keen insight of Paul Buys—Truchses becomes a spy upon him—Intrigues of Buys with Denmark—His imprisonment—The earl's unpopularity—His quarrels with the states and with the Norrises—His counselors Wilkes and Clerk—Letter from the queen to Leicester—A supper-party at Hohenlo's—A drunken quarrel—Hohenlo's assault upon Edward Norris—Ill effects of the riot.

THE brief period of sunshine had been swiftly followed by storms. The governor absolute had, from the outset, been placed in a false position. Before he came to the Netherlands the queen had refused the sovereignty. Perhaps it was wise in her to decline so magnificent an offer, yet certainly her acceptance would have been perfectly honorable. The constituted authorities of the provinces formally made the proposition. There is no doubt whatever that the whole population ardently desired to become her subjects. So far as the Netherlands were concerned, then, she would have been fully justified in extending her scepter over a free people, who, under no compulsion and without any diplomatic chicane, had selected her for their hereditary chief. So far as regarded England, the annexation to that coun-

try of a continental cluster of states, inhabited by a race closely allied to it by blood, religion, and the instinct for political freedom, seemed, on the whole, desirable.

In a financial point of view, England would certainly lose nothing by the union. The resources of the provinces were at least equal to her own. We have seen the astonishment which the wealth and strength of the Netherlands excited in their English visitors. They were amazed by the evidences of commercial and manufacturing prosperity, by the spectacle of luxury and advanced culture, which met them on every side. Had the queen, as it had been generally supposed, desired to learn whether the provinces were able and willing to pay the expenses of their own defense before she should definitely decide on their offer of sovereignty, she was soon thoroughly enlightened upon the subject.¹ Her confidential agents all held one language. If she would only accept the sovereignty, the amount which the provinces would pay was in a manner boundless. She was assured that the revenue of her own hereditary realm was much inferior to that of the possessions thus offered to her sway.²

In regard to constitutional polity, the condition of the Netherlands was at least as satisfactory as that of Eng-

¹ Hoofd, xxiii. 1039, 1042. Wagenaer, viii. 102, 104, 141, 142.

² "Neither do I easily see," wrote Richard Cavendish, "how the cause may be remedied, unless it may please her most excellent Majesty to take that upon her which the whole people (and specially they of the wiser sort) *both crave and cry for*, namely, the sovereignty. . . . *There is no doubt but the revenues will suffice to the driving of the enemy out of these countries forever, and afterward in clear profit unto her Majesty far surmount the receipts at home.*"—Cavendish to Burghley, April 9, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

"The people," said Leicester, "still pray God that her Majesty

land. The great amount of civil freedom enjoyed by those countries, although perhaps an objection in the eyes of Elizabeth Tudor, should certainly have been a recommendation to her liberty-loving subjects. The question of defense had been satisfactorily answered. The provinces, if an integral part of the English empire, could protect themselves, and would become an additional element of strength, not a troublesome encumbrance.

The difference of language was far less than that which already existed between the English and their Irish fellow-subjects, while it was counterbalanced by sympathy, instead of being aggravated by mutual hostility, in the matter of religion.

With regard to the great question of abstract sovereignty, it was certainly impolitic for an absolute monarch to recognize the right of a nation to repudiate its natural allegiance. But Elizabeth had already countenanced that step by assisting the rebellion against Philip. To allow the rebels to transfer their obedience from the King of Spain to herself was only another step in the same direction. The queen, should she annex the prov- will be their sovereign. She would then see what a contribution they will all bring forth."—Leicester to Burghley, June 18, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

"I may safely say to your Majesty," said he at about the same period, "that if your aid had been in such apparent sort to the countries that they might assure themselves of any certain time of continuance of the same, and that you had taken their cause indeed to heart, I am verily persuaded that they would have given very good testimonies by their very large contributions to maintain their wars for such certain number of years to be set down as your Majesty should appoint, and no prince nor practice of any person living able to draw them from you."—Leicester to the queen, June 27, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

inces, would certainly be accused by the world of ambition ; but the ambition was a noble one, if, by thus consenting to the urgent solicitations of a free people, she extended the region of civil and religious liberty, and raised up a permanent bulwark against sacerdotal and royal absolutism.

A war between herself and Spain was inevitable if she accepted the sovereignty, but peace had been already rendered impossible by the treaty of alliance. It is true that the queen imagined the possibility of combining her engagements toward the states with a conciliatory attitude toward their ancient master, but it was here that she committed the gravest error. The negotiations of Parma and his sovereign with the English court were a masterpiece of deceit on the part of Spain. We have shown, by the secret correspondence, and we shall in the sequel make it still clearer, that Philip only intended to amuse his antagonists ; that he had already prepared his plan for the conquest of England down to the minutest details ; that the idea of tolerating religious liberty had never entered his mind ; and that his fixed purpose was not only thoroughly to chastise the Dutch rebels, but to deprive the heretic queen who had fostered their rebellion both of throne and life. So far as regarded the Spanish king, then, the quarrel between him and Elizabeth was already mortal, while, in a religious, moral, political, and financial point of view, it would be difficult to show that it was wrong or imprudent for England to accept the sovereignty over his ancient subjects. The cause of human freedom seemed likely to gain by the step, for the states did not consider themselves strong enough to maintain the independent Republic which had already risen.

It might be a question whether, on the whole, Elizabeth made a mistake in declining the sovereignty. She was certainly wrong, however, in wishing the lieutenant-general of her six thousand auxiliary troops to be clothed, as such, with viceregal powers. The States-General, in a moment of enthusiasm, appointed him governor absolute, and placed in his hands not only the command of the forces, but the entire control of their revenues, imposts, and customs, together with the appointment of civil and military officers. Such an amount of power could only be delegated by the sovereign. Elizabeth had refused the sovereignty; it then rested with the states. They only, therefore, were competent to confer the power which Elizabeth wished her favorite to exercise simply as her lieutenant-general.

Her wrathful and vituperative language damaged her cause and that of the Netherlands more severely than can now be accurately estimated. The earl was placed at once in a false, a humiliating, almost a ridiculous position. The authority which the states had thus a second time offered to England was a second time and most scornfully thrust back upon them. Elizabeth was indignant that "her own man" should clothe himself in the supreme attributes which she had refused. The states were forced by the violence of the queen to take the authority into their own hands again, and Leicester was looked upon as a disgraced man.

Then came the neglect with which the earl was treated by her Majesty, and her ill-timed parsimony toward the cause. No letters to him in four months, no remittances for the English troops, not a penny of salary for him. The whole expense of the war was thrown for the time upon their hands, and the English soldiers seemed only

a few thousand starving, naked, dying vagrants, an encumbrance instead of an aid.¹

The states, in their turn, drew the purse-strings. The two hundred thousand florins monthly were paid. The four hundred thousand florins which had been voted as an additional supply were for a time held back, as Leicester expressly stated, because of the discredit which had been thrown upon him from home.²

The military operations were crippled for want of funds, but more fatal than everything else were the secret negotiations for peace. Subordinate individuals, like Grafigni and De Loo, went up and down, bringing

¹ "I find the most part of the bands that came over in August and September," said Quartermaster Digges, "more than half wasted, dead, and gone, and many of the remainder sick, lame, and shrewdly enfeebled, fitter to be relieved at home in hospitals than to take her Majesty's pay here for soldiers. . . . Our soldiers, notwithstanding *great numbers of them be paid with carth in their graves*, yet the rest are so ill contented of their due for the time past that, if pay come not speedily, before they be drawn to deal with the enemy, I doubt some worse adventure than I will divine beforehand."—Advertisement of the Present State of these Low Countries, by T. Digges, March 3 (13), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Strangely enough, Elizabeth was under the impression that the *extra* grant of four hundred thousand *florins* (forty thousand pounds) for four months was four hundred thousand *pounds sterling!* "The rest that was granted by the states as extraordinary to levy an army, which was four hundred thousand florins, not pounds, as I hear your Majesty taketh it. It is forty thousand pounds, and to be paid in March, April, May, and June last," etc.—Leicester to the queen, October 11, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

She had certainly formed already an exalted idea of the capacity of the provinces to protect themselves. She had in a year paid but seventy thousand pounds herself, and believed the states able, *over and above their regular* contributions, to furnish an extraordinary supply of one hundred thousand pounds a month.

presents out of England for Alexander Farnese,¹ and bragging that Parma and themselves could have peace whenever they liked to make it, and affirming that Leicester's opinions were of no account whatever. Elizabeth's coldness to the earl and to the Netherlands was affirmed to be the Prince of Parma's sheet-anchor, while meantime a house was ostentatiously² prepared in Brussels by his direction for the reception of an English ambassador, who was every moment expected to arrive.³ Under such circumstances it was in vain for the governor-general to protest that the accounts of secret negotiations were false, and quite natural that the states should lose their confidence in the queen. An unfriendly

¹ Leicester to the queen, June 6, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² "Amongst all the enemy's means to persuade his discontented and ill-fed companions," said Cavendish, "this seemeth to be his sheet-anchor, namely, that where the only comfort of this people dependeth wholly upon her Maj.'s most gracious relief and support, now is the disposition thereof in her so cooled, as she very faintly stretcheth forth her hand thereunto, which evidently appears, as well by the many disgraces which here my lord hath received from her Maj., to the great blemish of his authority, as also by the slack payment of her troops; . . . and so long as my lord shall be unable to front him in the field, so long will this people be without hope, and the enemy inflamed with assured hope of victory."—Cavendish to Burghley, June 15, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ "It is certainly known that the enemy hath not a little prevailed with that stratagem, causing to be published that there was a treaty of peace between her Majesty and him, and that the same should be shortly concluded; and to make this device to carry the more show of truth, he caused a house to be prepared in Brussels, saying that it was for an ambassador coming out of England to conclude the peace, by which means he hath contained divers towns in terms of obedience that were ready to revolt, in respect of their misery, poverty, and famine."—Wilkes to Burghley, August 7, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

and suspicious attitude toward her representative was a necessary result, and the demonstrations against the common enemy became still more languid. But for these underhand dealings Grave, Venlo, and Neuss might have been saved,¹ and the current of the Meuse and Rhine have remained in the hands of the patriots.

The earl was industrious, generous, and desirous of playing well his part. His personal courage was undoubted, and, in the opinion of his admirers,—themselves, some of them, men of large military experience,—his ability as a commander was of a high order.² The valor displayed by the English nobles and gentlemen who accompanied him was magnificent, worthy the descendants of the victors at Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt; and the good behavior of their followers, with a few rare exceptions, had been equally signal. But now the army was dwindling to a ghastly array of scarecrows, and the recruits, as they came from England, were appalled by the spectacle presented by their predecessors.³ “Our old ragged rogues here have so discouraged our new men,” said Leicester, “as I protest to you they look like dead men.”⁴ Out of eleven hundred freshly arrived Englishmen, five hundred ran away in two days.⁵ Some were caught and hanged, and all seemed to prefer hanging to remaining in the service, while the earl declared that he would be hanged as well

¹ Leicester to the queen, June 20, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² North to Burghley, May 23, 1586. Same to same, May 29, 1586. Heneage to Walsingham, May 25, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ Leicester to Burghley, June 18, 1586, S. P. Office MS. Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 338.

⁴ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 338.

⁵ Leicester to Burghley, MS. last cited. Bruce, *ubi sup.*

rather than again undertake such a charge without being assured payment for his troops beforehand.¹

The valor of Sydney and Essex, Willoughby and Pelham, Roger Williams and Martin Schenck, was set at naught by such untoward circumstances. Had not Philip also left his army to starve and Alexander Farnese to work miracles, it would have fared still worse with Holland and England, and with the cause of civil and religious liberty, in the year 1586.

The states, having resumed, as much as possible, their former authority, were on very unsatisfactory terms with the governor-general. Before long it was impossible for the twenty or thirty individuals called the states to be in the same town with the man whom, at the commencement of the year, they had greeted so warmly.² The hatred between the Leicester faction and the municipalities became intense, for the foundation of the two great parties which were long to divide the Netherland commonwealth was already laid. The mercantile patrician interest, embodied in the states of Holland and Zealand, and inclined to a large toleration in the matter of religion, which afterward took the form of Arminianism, was opposed by a strict Calvinist party, which desired to subject the political commonwealth to the Reformed Church, which nevertheless indulged in very democratic views of the social compact, and which was controlled by a few refugees from Flanders and Brabant, who had succeeded in obtaining the confidence of Leicester.

Thus the earl was the nominal head of the Calvinist

¹ Leicester to Burghley, MS. last cited. Bruce, ubi sup.

² Doyley to Burghley, August 8, 1586, S. P. Office MS. Compare Wagenaer, viii. 142, 143.

democratic party, while young Maurice of Nassau, stadholder of Holland and Zealand, and guided by Barneveldt, Buys, and other leading statesmen of these provinces, was in an attitude precisely the reverse of the one which he was destined at a later and equally memorable epoch to assume. The chiefs of the faction which had now succeeded in gaining the confidence of Leicester were Reingault, Burgrave, and Deventer, all refugees.

The laws of Holland and of the other United States were very strict on the subject of citizenship, and no one but a native was competent to hold office in each province. Doubtless such regulations were narrow-spirited, but to fly in the face of them was the act of a despot, and this is what Leicester did. Reingault was a Fleming. He was a bankrupt merchant, who had been taken into the protection of Lamoral Egmont, and by that nobleman recommended to Granvelle for an office under the cardinal's government. The refusal of this favor was one of the original causes of Egmont's hostility to Granvelle. Reingault subsequently entered the service of the cardinal, however, and rewarded the kindness of his former benefactor by great exertions in finding, or inventing, evidence to justify the execution of that unfortunate nobleman. He was afterward much employed by the Duke of Alva and by the Grand Commander Requesens, but after the Pacification of Ghent he had been completely thrown out of service. He had recently, in a subordinate capacity, accompanied the legations of the states to France and to England, and had now contrived to ingratiate himself with the Earl of Leicester. He affected great zeal for the Calvinistic religion,—an exhibition which, in the old servant of Granvelle and Alva, was far from edifying,—and would

employ no man- or maid-servant in his household until their religious principles had been thoroughly examined by one or two clergymen. In brief, he was one of those who, according to a homely Flemish proverb, are wont to hang their piety on the bell-rope; but, with the exception of this brief interlude in his career, he lived and died a papist.¹

Gerard Proninck, called Deventer, was a respectable inhabitant of Bois-le-Duc, who had left that city after it had again become subject to the authority of Spain. He was of decent life and conversation, but a restless and ambitious demagogue. As a Brabantine, he was unfit for office; and yet, through Leicester's influence and the intrigues of the democratic party, he obtained the appointment of burgomaster in the city of Utrecht. The States-General, however, always refused to allow him to appear at their sessions as representative of that city.²

Daniel de Burgrave was a Flemish mechanic, who, by the exertion of much energy and talent, had risen to the post of procureur-général of Flanders. After the conquest of the principal portion of that province by Parma, he had made himself useful to the English governor-general in various ways, and particularly as a linguist. He spoke English,—a tongue with which few Netherlanders of that day were familiar,—and as the earl knew no other, except (very imperfectly) Italian, he found his services in speaking and writing a variety of languages very convenient. He was the governor's private secretary, and of course had no entrance to the council of state, but he was accused of frequently thrusting himself into their hall of sessions, where, under pretense of

¹ Hoofd, Vervolgh, 142, 143. Reyd, v. 89, 90.

² Ibid.

arranging the earl's table or portfolio or papers, he was much addicted to whispering into his master's ear, listening to conversation—to eavesdropping, in short, and general intrusiveness.¹

“A most faithful, honest servant is Burgrave,” said Leicester, “a substantial, wise man.² ’T is as sufficient a man as ever I met withal of any nation; very well learned, exceeding wise, and sincere in religion. I cannot commend the man too much. He is the only comfort I have had of any of this nation.”³

These three personages were the leaders of the Leicester faction. They had much influence with all the refugees from Flanders, Brabant, and the Walloon provinces. In Utrecht, especially, where the earl mainly resided, their intrigues were very successful. Deventer was appointed, as already stated, to the important post of burgomaster; many of the influential citizens were banished, without cause or trial; the upper branch of the municipal government, consisting of the clerical delegates of the colleges, was in an arbitrary manner abolished; and, finally, the absolute sovereignty of the province, without condition, was offered to the Queen of England.⁴

Leicester was now determined to carry out one of the great objects which the queen had in view when she sent him to the Netherlands. She desired thoroughly to ascertain the financial resources of the provinces and their capacity to defend themselves.⁵ It was supposed by the

¹ Hoofd, Reyd, *ubi sup.*

² Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 363, 422.

³ Leicester to Walsingham, July 27, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

⁴ *Bor.*, ii. 722.

⁵ Hoofd, 1039, 1042. Wagenaer, viii. 142.

states, and hoped by the earl and by a majority of the Netherland people, that she would, in case the results were satisfactory, accept, after all, the sovereignty. She certainly was not to be blamed that she wished to make this most important investigation, but it was her own fault that any new machinery had been rendered necessary. The whole control of the finances had, in the beginning of the year, been placed in the earl's hands,¹ and it was only by her violently depriving him of his credit and of the confidence of the country that he had not retained it. He now established a finance chamber, under the chief control of Reingault, who promised him mountains of money, and who was to be chief treasurer.²

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 1585. "And," said he to the lord mayor and aldermen of London, "you may all sleep quietly in England so long as these countries may be held in their earnest good will."

² Bor, ii. 722.

Leicester to Burghley, June 28, 1586. Cavendish to same, June 19, 1586. Leicester to the queen, June 26, 1586. Same to same, June 27, 1586. Wilkes to lords of council, August 20, 1586. S. P. Office MSS.

"The Prince of Orange," said Cavendish (MS. ubi sup.), "being not ignorant of the frauds of the states, often leveled at this matter [a finance council], but was never able to hit it, because they knew he was poor and had no way else to live but upon their alms-basket. . . . Amongst other things there is one impost granted by favor to some parties for one hundred pounds by the year, which is indeed worth eight thousand pounds. With these tricks have they enriched themselves, all which devices must now quail." If such stories, which were daily whispered into Leicester's ears, had a shadow of foundation, it was not surprising that he should expect to increase the revenue by a more judicious farming. But he never found his "mountains of gold," nor any collector who could turn a hundred pounds into eight thousand. "I have," said Leicester (letters to the queen, ubi sup.), "established, against the wills of some here, a chamber of finance, by which I shall be

Paul Buys was appointed by Leicester to fill a subordinate position in the new council. He spurned the offer with great indignation, saying that Reingault was not fit to be his clerk, and that he was not likely himself, therefore, to accept a humble post under the administration of such an individual. This scornful refusal filled to the full the hatred of Leicester against the ex-advocate of Holland.¹

The mercantile interest at once took the alarm, because it was supposed that the finance chamber was intended to crush the merchants. Early in April an act had been passed by the state council prohibiting commerce with the Spanish possessions. The embargo was intended to injure the obedient provinces and their

sure to be privy to the levying and bestowing of all their revenues — a matter your Majesty hath often sought to understand thereof. But, with all the wit and means I could use, could never certainly bring it to pass, nor never will but by this only way. I trust shortly to have very assured knowledge to satisfy your Majesty of the states' ability, which thing I have gone about from the beginning. I hope within twenty days to give your Majesty some near reckoning of all their revenues every way. Your Majesty doth suppose I deal weakly with these men, but I would you knew how I have dealt with them of late to bring the office of finance to pass. I had a good will to have dealt long since roundly with them, I confess, but my case was too well known to them. But as soon as my heartening came from mine old supporter, I was found a more shrew than your Majesty will believe, for mine old patience hath been too much tried since I came from my quiet home to this wayward generation."

"I find that until the time of my coming hither," said Wilkes (letter to council, ubi sup.), "the states have been contented to disguise and conceal the truth of many particularities, which now they profess to discover, meaning, as they say, *to anatomize unto her Majesty* the whole state of their strength."

¹ Bor, ii. 722.

sovereign, but it was shown that its effect would be to blast the commerce of Holland. It forbade the exportation from the Republic not only of all provisions and munitions of war, but of all goods and merchandise whatever, to Spain, Portugal, the Spanish Netherlands, or any other of Philip's territories, either in Dutch or neutral vessels.¹ It would certainly seem, at first sight, that such an act was reasonable, although the result would really be, not to deprive the enemy of supplies, but to throw the whole Baltic trade into the hands of the Bremen, Hamburg, and "Osterling" merchants. Leicester expected to derive a considerable revenue by granting passports and licenses to such neutral traders, but the edict became so unpopular that it was never thoroughly enforced, and was before long rescinded.²

The odium of the measure was thrown upon the governor-general, yet he had in truth opposed it in the state council, and was influential in procuring its repeal.³

¹ Bor, ii. 703 seq., who is, however, mistaken in ascribing the measure to the inspiration of Leicester.

² Ibid. Wagenaer, viii. 147 seq., who is in this matter even more unjust to the earl than contemporary authorities.

³ Leicester to the queen, October 11, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

"I have very good testimony of all the council here," said the earl, "that I only in council stood against the placard, insomuch it lay a month by, for, indeed, I thought it unreasonable, and that it would give all princes just cause of offense toward this country, and, by all duty to your Majesty, I *did refuse to let it pass*. At length *both states and council* renewed the matter again to me, and showed me presently how the like had been done, and what profit it would bring, pressing me to give it some consideration in council to be debated. It went so through them all as there was not a man spake against it, yet my resolution being to be had, I would give no consent till I had advertised your Majesty thereof, which they all liked well. And after it was agreed and published it was

Another important act had been directed against the mercantile interest, and excited much general discontent. The Netherlands wished the staple of the English cloth manufacture to be removed from Emden, the petty sovereign of which place was the humble servant of Spain, to Amsterdam or Delft. The desire was certainly natural, and the Dutch merchants sent a committee to confer with Leicester. He was much impressed with their views, and with the sagacity of their chairman, one Mylward, "a wise fellow and well languaged, an ancient man and very religious," as the earl pronounced him to be.¹

Notwithstanding the wisdom of this well-languaged fellow, however, the queen, for some strange reason, could not be induced to change the staple from Emden, although it was shown that the public revenue of the Netherlands would gain twenty thousand pounds a year by the measure. "All Holland will cry out for it," said Leicester, "but I had rather they cried than that England should weep."²

Thus the mercantile community, and especially the patrician families of Holland and Zealand, all engaged in trade, became more and more hostile to the governor-general and to his financial trio, who were soon almost as unpopular as the famous consulta of Cardinal Granvelle had been. It was the custom of the states to consider the men who surrounded the earl as needy and again by my means revoked and qualified, as doth appear by record."

Compare Meteren, xiii. 234^{vo}; Wagenaer, ubi sup.; Bor, ubi sup., who seems to be mistaken on this point.

The real author of the edict was Reingault (Meteren, ubi sup.).

¹ Leicester to Burghley, July 29, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Same to same, August 10, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

unprincipled renegades and adventurers. It was the policy of his advisers to represent the merchants and the states, which mainly consisted of or were controlled by merchants, as a body of corrupt, selfish, greedy money-getters.¹

¹ "The wonderful cunning dealing of *those fellows here called the states* concerning the finances and the receipt of revenue, whereupon the people rest greatly grieved, and themselves, as is thought, no less enriched."—Cavendish to Burghley, April 9, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

"The states be sly persons," said Lord North, "inconstant and treacherous, the most of them papists (!), and so rich as they will do any turn to serve themselves. If they again find that her Majesty likes not of my lord's authority, they will doubt of their own safety, practise their own peace, and leave my lord and all his to the spirit of the enemy."—North to Burghley, May 23, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

"These be dainty and dangerous people to deal withal," said Leicester, "specially when they shall be desperate of their hope and disappointed of their help. I must say truly to your Majesty I do find some of the best sort as honest and as thankful as ever I knew men, and some others as perverse and as ingrate as might well be spared out of all good company. There are also men who are able and do most hurt. . . . These men begin utterly to despair of your Majesty's good assistance, and an apt time is offered now for the lewd and bad-disposed persons to work their feat."—Leicester to the queen, June 6, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

"The whole people," said Cavendish, "are here so addicted to her Majesty, and in respect of her to my lord, in whom they find such incessant travail and care for her service and their general good, and in respect of whom they would willingly cashier, or rather hang, all those called states. Your Lordship may think I write vehemently, but I know I write truly."—Cavendish to Burghley, June 19, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

"It will be a harder matter," said Leicester again, "than you can imagine, to bring this state in that tune it was three months past. It will require a whole and full countenance from her Majesty, and with all speed possible, if you will have it kept from the

The calumnies put in circulation against the states by Reingault and his associates grew at last so outrageous, and the prejudice created in the mind of Leicester and his immediate English adherents so intense, that it was rendered necessary for the states of Holland and Zealand

enemy. And beware these fellows do not prevent her Majesty. If they do, you can consider how harmful it is like to prove, and *though they be counted dullards and drunkards, they have shrewd and subtle heads as ever I found anywhere. . . . The best man in England were not too good, as matters stand, to be employed hither, either to encourage them thoroughly, or to understand their estate more deeply.*"—Leicester to Burghley, July 20, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

"I did never see such heady people as these states are," said the earl once more. "I cannot blame the common sort to dislike them, for there is no reasoning against their resolutions. . . . There must be very wise and good handling had in these causes. There is no more such people to deal withal again. I mean these that be rich and politic fellows. They hunt after their own wealth and surety, and without an assurance of a strange assistance they will be suddenly gone, and it is high time to look into the course her Majesty will take hereafter."—Same to same, July 29, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

"They have given to my Lord of Leicester," said Wilkes, "a government with the word 'absolute,' but with so many restrictions that his authority is limited almost to nothing, and he is in truth for the politic government but their servant, having reserved to themselves, besides the sovereignty, the disposing of all the contributions (saving the monthly allowance), the church goods, confiscations, choice of officers; . . . and to keep themselves from rendering account of anything, they do impugn his court of finances now erected, alleging that he hath not authority to erect any such court, or to establish offices without their license."—Wilkes to lords of council, August 20, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

"The exactions and excises are incredible that are laid on this people," said Digges, "and such as in all probability do amount to three times as much (!) as the two hundred thousand florins monthly which they allow his Excellency to prosecute the war. The rest they divide among themselves, . . . giving great stipends to Count

to write to their agent Ortel in London, that he might forestall the effect of these perpetual misrepresentations on her Majesty's government.¹ Leicester, on the other hand, under the inspiration of his artful advisers, was

Hollock, Count Maurice, Count Meurs, Count William, and many colonels. But for all this, the states offer that there shall be new impositions to levy more."—T. Digges, Advertisement of Present State of the Low Countries, March 3 (13), 1586, S. P. Office MS.

¹ "You have doubtless understood," said the states, "of the erection of the finance council for the better husbanding of the money furnished by these countries, of the which Jacques Ringault is ordained treasurer. . . . Stephen Perret (a seditious person, often imprisoned, and a fraudulent bankrupt), being come out of Antwerp after the yielding up of the same, hath kept correspondence with Ringault whilst he was in England. Very shortly after the coming of his Excellency into these countries he hath sought by all possible means to bring him in suspicion and jealousy by the estates of the country, and propounded manifold novelties unto his Excellency whereby to levy money, and *in the propounding thereof shamefully slandered the estates with injurious, seditious, and untrue reports and drifts*. After Ringault's arrival here he hath found means to get in better credit by his Excellency, and laying their heads together, and *either being set awork by the enemy, or else thinking to enrich themselves* out of the calamity and misery of these countries, have made agreement between them in April last that all that which they, by means of any new invention by them already propounded or yet to be propounded unto his Excellency, should get or enjoy, *that the same should be divided between them*. And after that he sought of his Excellency the twentieth penny of all that which should proceed of his pretended inventions. To which end Ringault, with his own hand, has drawn an octroi, or warrant, and got his Excellency to sign the same, without knowledge of the council, or any of the secretaries, namely, that he should have the thirtieth penny. They have also taken great pains to change the course of the common means, which so laudably and with such great travail his Excellency of worthy memory (William of Orange) brought in train, and so to bring it into collection, thereby to intrude themselves and such other (having no credit)

vehement in his entreaties that Ortel should be sent away from England.¹

The ablest and busiest of the opposition party, the "nimblest head"² in the States-General, was the ex-advocate of Holland, Paul Buys. This man was then the foremost statesman in the Netherlands. He had been the firmest friend to the English alliance; he had resigned his office when the states were offering the sovereignty to France, and had been on the point of taking service in Denmark. He had afterward been prominent in the legation which offered the sovereignty to Elizabeth, and for a long time had been the most firm, earnest, and eloquent advocate of the English policy. Leices-

to farm any of the said general means in the collection. The foresaid Perret and Ringault have also travailed by all means to set misunderstanding between his Excellency and the estates and the council of state, and practised many unlawful devices to alter the estate of the countries, and to get his Excellency to do all that which they imagined to serve to their intent, to which end they have used many unheard-of and indecent proceedings without order of law, and against the privileges and customs of these countries, and against the estate and welfare of the same, through a company of inconstant and base persons, for the greater part being strangers, applying unto themselves and their friends (a company of strangers) many offices and receipts, thinking to deal with the same according to their own pleasure and appetite. All which we have at large imparted to Mr. Wilkes, showed him the original pieces, and given him good instruction by writing thereof, to the end he may give her Majesty and her honorable council to understand the personage of these two spirits."—States of Holland and Zeeland to Ortel, September 12, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

¹ "You have there his [Paul Buys's] agent Ortel. It were well he were thence. I did send twice for him, but he excuseth himself."—Leicester to Burghley, July 20, 1586, S. P. Office MS. Compare Leye. Corresp., 311.

² Bartholomew Clerk to Burghley, July 24, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

ter had originally courted him, caressed him, especially recommended him to the queen's favor, given him money, —as he said, "two hundred pounds sterling thick at a time,"—and openly pronounced him to be "in ability above all men."¹ "No man hath ever sought a man," he said, "as I have sought P. B."²

The period of their friendship was, however, very brief. Before many weeks had passed there was no vituperative epithet that Leicester was not in the daily habit of bestowing upon Paul. The earl's vocabulary of abuse was not a limited one, but he exhausted it on the head of the advocate. He lacked at last words and breath to utter what was like him. He pronounced his former friend "a very dangerous man, altogether hated of the people and the states"; "a lewd sinner, nursled in revolutions"; "a most covetous, bribing fellow, caring for nothing but to bear the sway and grow rich"; "a man who had played many parts, both lewd and audacious"; "a very knave, a traitor to his country"; "the most ungrateful wretch alive, a hater of the queen and of all the English, a most unthankful man to her Majesty, a practiser to make himself rich and great, and nobody else"; "among all villains the greatest"; "a bolsterer of all papists and ill men, a dissembler, a devil, an atheist"; "a most naughty man, and a most notorious drunkard in the worst degree."

Where the earl hated, his hatred was apt to be deadly, and he was determined, if possible, to have the life of the detested Paul. "You shall see I will do well enough with him, and that shortly," he said. "I will course him as he was not so this twenty year. I will warrant him

¹ Leicester to Burghley, August 10, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² *Ibid.*

hanged and one or two of his fellows, but you must not tell your shirt of this yet"; and when he was congratulating the government on his having at length procured the execution of Captain Hemart, the surrenderer of Grave, he added pithily, "And you shall hear that Mr. P. B. shall follow."¹

Yet the earl's real griefs against Buys may be easily summed up. The "lewd sinner, nursled in revolutions," had detected the secret policy of the queen's government, and was therefore perpetually denouncing the intrigues going on with Spain. He complained that her Majesty was tired of having engaged in the Netherland enterprise; he declared that she would be glad to get fairly out of it, that her reluctance to spend a farthing more in the cause than she was obliged to do was hourly increasing upon her, that she was deceiving and misleading the States-General, and that she was hankering after a peace. He said that the earl had a secret intention to possess himself of certain towns in Holland, in which case the whole question of peace and war would be in the hands of the queen, who would also have it thus in her power to reimburse herself at once for all expenses that she had incurred.²

¹ Leicester to Burghley, June 20, 1586. Same to same, August 10, 1586. Same to same, July 20, 1586. B. Clerk to same, July 24. S. P. Office MSS.

Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 130, 291, 303, 310, 311, 312, 352. Cavendish observed that "there were many false brethren in the higher form among the people, of whom he feared that Paul Buys would not prove the puisne."—Cavendish to Burghley, June 15, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² "Paul Buys, still giving out slanderous speeches, for that I only sought to . . . *get their towns*, . . . that thereby, whensoever her Majesty should think good to treat for peace, . . . I should

It would be difficult to show that there was anything very calumnious in these charges, which, no doubt, Paul was in the habit of making. As to the economical tendencies of her Majesty, sufficient evidence has been given already from Leicester's private letters. "Rather than spend one hundred pounds," said Walsingham, "she can be content to be deceived of five thousand."¹ That she had been concealing from the states, from Walsingham, from Leicester, during the whole summer, her secret negotiations with Spain, has also been made apparent. That she was disgusted with the enterprise in which she had embarked, Walsingham, Burghley, Hatton, and all the other statesmen of England most abundantly testified. Whether Leicester had really an intention to possess himself of certain cities in Holland—a charge made by Paul Buys, and denounced as especially slanderous by the earl—may better appear from his own private statements.

"*This I will do,*" he wrote to the queen, "*and I hope not to fail of it, to get into my hands three or four most principal places in North Holland, which will be such a strength and assurance for your Majesty as you shall see you shall both rule these men and make war or peace as you list, always provided—whatsoever you hear, or is—part not with the Brill; and having these places in your hands, whatsoever should chance to these countries, your Majesty, I will warrant sure enough to make what peace you will in an hour, and to have your debts and charges readily answered.*"² At a somewhat later moment it will be seen what came of

hereby be able to compel them to what end she should think good."—Leicester to Walsingham, July 20, 1586, in Bruce, 376.

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 273.

² Leicester to the queen, June 27, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

these secret designs. For the present, Leicester was very angry with Paul for daring to suspect him of such treachery.

The earl complained, too, that the influence of Buys with Hohenlo and young Maurice of Nassau was most pernicious. Hohenlo had formerly stood high in Leicester's opinion. He was "a plain, faithful soldier, a most valiant gentleman," and he was still more important because about to marry Mary of Nassau, eldest daughter of William the Silent, and coheirress with Philip William to the Buren property. But he had been tampered with by the intriguing Paul Buys, and had then wished to resign his office under Leicester. Being pressed for reasons, he had "grown solemn" and withdrawn himself almost entirely.

Maurice, with his "solemn, sly wit," also gave the earl much trouble, saying little, but thinking much, and listening to the insidious Paul. He "stood much on making or marring," so Leicester thought, "as he met with good counsel." He had formerly been on intimate terms with the governor-general, who affected to call him his son; but he had subsequently kept aloof, and in three months had not come near him.¹ The earl thought that money might do much, and was anxious for Sir Francis Drake to come home from the Indies with millions of

¹ "The Count Maurice hath not been three months with his Lordship. He is utterly discontented, and much advised by Sainte-Aldegonde, who is assuredly the King of Spain's, and practiseth (as an instrument of sedition) to animate the count by all means possible to thwart my lord in the course of her Majesty's service. The count, well advised by Sainte-Aldegonde and Villiers, repineth secretly that her Majesty should have anything to do in the government of the country. It is to be feared his hidden malice will do much mischief, and many ill offices in the common cause

gold, that the queen might make both Hohenlo and Maurice a handsome present before it should be too late.¹

Meantime he did what he could with Elector Truchses to lure them back again. That forlorn little prelate was now poorer and more wretched than ever. He was becoming paralytic, though young, and his heart was broken through want. Leicester, always generous as the sun, gave him money, four thousand florins at a time, and was most earnest that the queen should put him on her pension-list.² "His wisdom, his behavior, his languages, his person," said the earl, "all would like her well. He is in great melancholy for his town of Neuss, and for his poverty, having a very noble mind. If he be lost, her Majesty had better lose a hundred thousand pounds."³

The melancholy Truchses now became a spy and a go-between. He insinuated himself into the confidence of Paul Buys, wormed his secrets from him, and then communicated them to Hohenlo and to Leicester; "but he did it very wisely," said the earl, "so that he was not mistrusted."⁴ The governor always affected, in order to screen the elector from suspicion, to obtain his information from persons in Utrecht; and he had indeed many spies in that city, who diligently reported Paul's table-talk. Nevertheless, that "noble gentleman, the elector," said Leicester, "hath dealt most deeply with him, to seek out the bottom."⁵ As the ex-advocate of Holland was

now in hand."—Matters to be related to her Majesty by a special messenger from the Earl of Leicester, June 20, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

The opinion here expressed in regard to Sainte-Aldegonde was subsequently and distinctly contradicted by Wilkes.

¹ Bruce's *Ley*. Corresp., 374.

² *Ibid.*, 378.

³ *Ibid.*, 374.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 377.

Ibid.

very communicative in his cups, and very bitter against the governor-general, there was soon such a fund of information collected on the subject by various eavesdroppers that Leicester was in hopes of very soon hanging Mr. Paul Buys, as we have already seen.

The burden of the charges against the culprit was his statement that the provinces would be gone if her Majesty did not declare herself vigorously and generously in their favor; but, as this was the perpetual cry of Leicester himself, there seemed hardly hanging matter in that. That noble gentleman, the elector, however, had nearly saved the hangman his trouble, having so dealt with Hohenlo as to "bring him into as good a mind as ever he was"; and the first-fruits of this good mind were that the honest count—a man of prompt dealings—walked straight to Paul's house in order to kill him on the spot.¹ Something fortunately prevented the execution of this plan; but for a time, at least, the energetic count continued to be "governed greatly" by the ex-archbishop, and "did impart wholly unto him his most secret heart."

Thus the "deep, wise Truxy," as Leicester called him, continued to earn golden opinions, and followed up his conversion of Hohenlo by undertaking to "bring Maurice into tune again also," and the young prince was soon on better terms with his "affectionate father" than he had ever been before.²

Paul Buys was not so easily put down, however, nor the two magnates so thoroughly gained over. Before the end of the season Maurice stood in his old position, the nominal head of the Holland or patrician party, chief of the opposition to Leicester, while Hohenlo had

¹ Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 372.

² *Ibid.*, 376.

become more bitter than ever against the earl. The quarrel between himself and Edward Norris, to which allusion will soon be made, tended to increase the dissatisfaction, although he singularly misunderstood Leicester's sentiments throughout the whole affair. Hohenlo recovered of his wound before Zutphen, but, on his recovery, was more malcontent than ever.¹ The earl was obliged at last to confess that "he was a very dangerous man, inconstant, envious, and hateful to all our nation, and a very traitor to the cause. There is no dealing to win him," he added; "I have sought it to my cost. His best friends tell me he is not to be trusted."²

Meantime that "lewd sinner," the indefatigable Paul, was plotting desperately—so Leicester said and believed—to transfer the sovereignty of the provinces to the King of Denmark. Buys, who was privately of opinion that the states required an absolute head, "though it were but an onion's head,"³ and that they would thankfully continue under Leicester as governor absolute if Elizabeth would accept the sovereignty, had made up his mind that the queen would never take that step. He was therefore disposed to offer the crown to the King of Denmark, and was believed to have brought Maurice, who was to espouse that king's daughter,⁴ to the same way of thinking. Young Count Rantzan, son of a dis-

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 378.

² *Ibid.*, 446.

Wilkes had also formed an unfavorable opinion of the count. "I do not find that the states or people," he said, "have any great affection for him. The man is doubtless valiant, but rash, bloody, unfortunate, and subject to many imperfections. They would willingly be rid of him if they might without danger."—Wilkes to the lords of council, August 20, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ Notes by Paul Buys, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

⁴ *Ibid.*

tinguished Danish statesman, made a visit to the Netherlands in order to confer with Buys. Paul was also anxious to be appointed envoy to Denmark, ostensibly to arrange for the two thousand cavalry which the king had long before promised for the assistance of the provinces, but in reality to examine the details of this new project; and Leicester represented to the queen very earnestly how powerful the Danish monarch would become, thus rendered master of the narrow seas, and how formidable to England.¹

¹ "Paul Buys, . . . perceiving of late," said Leicester, "that your Maj. meaneth not to proceed so far in these countries as he looked for, or rather not finding himself the absolute director and governor as he would be, is secretly working to make a king indeed over those two countries, Holland and Zealand, and one he doth insinuate unto men's minds already all that ever he can is the King of Denmark—a matter not unlike to come to pass, if your Maj. shall not assure these people of the continuance of your favor, which if they should be, all the princes of the world cannot win them from you. But this lewd sinner loseth no time, where he can be heard, to inform men how fickle a trust there is to be had of your Majesty's favor or promise, repenting withal greatly that he ever procured me over, being, indeed, as he says, since fallen out in no better grace with you. . . . If the king should have these two provinces absolutely as king, you must assure yourself he will be lord and commander over the narrow seas, and all your traffics, east and northward, wholly under his restraint, for *he will be the only mighty prince by sea*. . . . I refused P. B. to go to the king as ambassador, being marvelous earnest therein, . . . but I trust to come to further knowledge of this matter, and to prevent Master Buys well enough. P. B. hath flatly said to me, of late, that the King of Denmark were the fittest lord for them in Christendom, *next your Majesty*."—Leicester to the queen, June 20, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

"It is feared," said Cox, specially deputed by Leicester to report this matter to the queen's government, "that the King of Denmark is alienated, and would be glad to have the sovereignty of these

In the midst of these plottings, real or supposed, a party of armed men, one fine summer's morning, suddenly entered Paul's bedroom as he lay asleep at the house of the burgomaster, seized his papers, and threw him into prison in the wine-cellar of the town house. "O my papers, O my papers!" cried the unfortunate politician, according to Leicester's statement. "The Queen of England will forever hate me." The earl disavowed all participation in the arrest, but he was not believed. He declared himself not sorry that the measure had been taken, and promised that he would not "be hasty to release him," not doubting that "he would be found faulty enough." Leicester maintained that there was

countries himself. Paul Buys hath not spared of late to intend such a practice, and participating the same with Count Maurice, alleging plainly to his Lordship that it is commonly spoken and received as current money that her Majesty will abandon that cause and people at Michaelmas, and this being so, that it were fit for them to think of some other prince who might protect and defend them before they should fall into further misery. He was of opinion that the King of Denmark would most gladly entertain the action. He was strong in shipping, and best able, in that respect, to defend the best part of their countries, which was Holland and Zealand. His speeches were often intermingled with many-colored protestations, how much he desired that her Maj. would continue their gracious lady in the cause, as the fittest princess to yield them comfort in their calamities; yet hath his Lordship been certainly informed that he practiseth with all earnestness to bring this matter to pass for the King of Denmark, and hath greatly desired that he may be the man to go into Denmark to solicit for the two thousand horses promised, for the end he may better disguise his purpose under this color," etc.—Matters to be related to her Majesty, June 20, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

Robert Sydney was subsequently sent to Denmark by Leicester to look into this matter (Wilkes to lords of council, August 20, 1586, S. P. Office MS.).

stuff enough discovered to cost Paul his head; but he never lost his head, nor was anything treasonable or criminal ever found against him. The intrigue with Denmark, never proved, and commenced, if undertaken at all, in utter despair of Elizabeth's accepting the sovereignty, was the gravest charge. He remained, however, six months in prison, and at the beginning of 1587 was released, without trial or accusation, at the request of the English queen.¹

The states could hardly be blamed for their opposition to the earl's administration, for he had thrown himself completely into the arms of a faction whose object was to vilipend and traduce them, and it was now difficult for him to recover the functions of which the queen had deprived him. "The government they had given from themselves to me stuck in their stomachs always," he said. Thus, on the one side, the states were "growing more stately than ever," and were always "jumbling underhand," while the aristocratic earl, on his part, was resolute not to be put down by "churls and tinkers."² He was sure that the people were with him, and that, "having always been governed by some prince, they never did nor could consent to be ruled by bakers, brewers, and hired advocates. I know they hate them,"³ said this high-born tribune of the people. He was much disgusted with the many-headed chimera, the monstrous Republic, with which he found himself in such unceasing conflict, and was disposed to take a manful stand. "I

¹ Bor, ii. 725, 726, 889, 890. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 165. Wagenaer, viii. 161-163. Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 352, 362-364, 386, 436.

Leicester to Burghley, July 20, 1586. B. Clerk to same, July 24, 1586. S. P. Office MSS.

² Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 312.

³ *Ibid.*, 424.

have been fain of late," he said, "to set the better leg foremost, to handle some of my masters somewhat plainly, for they thought I would droop; and whatsoever becomes of me, you shall hear I will keep my reputation, or die for it."¹

But one great accusation made against the churls and tinkers, and bakers and hired advocates, and Mr. Paul Buys at their head, was that they were liberal toward the papists. They were willing that Catholics should remain in the country and exercise the rights of citizens, provided they conducted themselves like good citizens. For this toleration—a lesson which statesmen like Buys and Barneveldt had learned in the school of William the Silent—the opposition party were denounced as bolsterers of papists, and papists themselves at heart, and "worshippers of idolatrous idols."²

From words, too, the government of Leicester passed to acts. Seventy papists were banished from the city of Utrecht at the time of the arrest of Buys.³ The queen had constantly enforced upon Leicester the importance of dealing justly with the Catholics in the Netherlands, on the ground that they might be as good patriots and were as much interested in the welfare of their country as were the Protestants;⁴ and he was especially enjoined "not to meddle in matters of religion." This wholesome advice it would have been quite impossible for the earl, under the guidance of Reingault, Burgrave, and Stephen Perret, to carry out. He protested that he should have

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 312.

² Digges's Advertisement of the Present State, etc., S. P. Office MS. before cited.

³ B. Clerk to Burghley, July 24, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

⁴ Leicester to the queen, June 26, 1586, S. P. Office MS.



ROBERT DUDLEY, EARL OF LEICESTER.
From a painting by Frederico Zuccaro.

liked to treat papists and Calvinists "with indifference," but that it had proved impossible; that the Catholics were perpetually plotting with the Spanish faction, and that no towns were safe except those in which papists had been excluded from office. "They love the pope above all," he said, "and the Prince of Parma hath continual intelligence with them." Nor was it Catholics alone who gave the governor trouble. He was likewise very busy in putting down other denominations that differed from the Calvinists. "Your Majesty will not believe," he said, "the number of sects that are in most towns, especially Anabaptists, Families of Love, Georgians, and I know not what. The godly and good ministers were molested by them in many places, and ready to give over; and even such diversities grew among magistrates in towns, being caused by some sedition-sowers here."¹ It is, however, satisfactory to reflect that the Anabaptists and Families of Love, although discouraged and frowned upon, were not burned alive, buried alive, drowned in dungeons, and roasted at slow fires, as had been the case with them and with every other species of Protestants, by thousands and tens of thousands, so long as Charles V. and Philip II. had ruled the territory of that commonwealth. Humanity had acquired something by the war which the Netherlanders had been waging for twenty years, and no man or woman was ever put to death for religious causes after the establishment of the Republic.

With his hands thus full of business, it was difficult for the earl to obey the queen's command not to meddle in religious matters; for he was not of the stature of William the Silent, and could not comprehend that the

¹ Leicester to the queen, June 26, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

great lesson taught by the sixteenth century was that men were not to meddle with men in matters of religion.

But besides his especial nightmare, Mr. Paul Buys, the governor-general had a whole set of incubi in the Norris family. Probably no two persons ever detested each other more cordially than did Leicester and Sir John Norris. Sir John had been commander of the forces in the Netherlands before Leicester's arrival, and was unquestionably a man of larger experience than the earl. He had, however, as Walsingham complained, acquired by his services in "countries where neither discipline military nor religion carried any sway" a very rude and licentious kind of government. "Would to God," said the secretary, "that, with his value and courage, he carried the mind and reputation of a religious soldier."¹ But that was past praying for. Sir John was proud, untractable, turbulent, very difficult to manage. He hated Leicester, and was furious with Sir William Pelham, whom Leicester had made marshal of the camp.² He complained, not unjustly, that from the first place in the army, which he had occupied in the Netherlands, he had been reduced to the fifth.³ The governor-general—who chose to call Sir John the son of his ancient enemy, the Earl of Sussex—often denounced him in good set terms. "His brother Edward is as ill as he," he said, "but John is right the late Earl of Sussex's son; he will so dissemble and crouch, and so cunningly carry his doings, as no man living would imagine that there were half the malice or vindictive mind that plainly his words prove to be."⁴ Leicester accused him of constant

¹ Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.*, 222.

² "He stomachs greatly the marshal," said Leicester (*ibid.*, 379)

³ *Ibid.*, 380.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 301.

insubordination, insolence, and malice, complained of being traduced by him everywhere in the Netherlands and in England, and declared that he was followed about by "a pack of lewd, audacious fellows," whom the earl vowed he would hang, one and all, before he had done with them.¹ He swore openly, in presence of all his camp, that he would hang Sir John likewise, so that both the brothers, who had never been afraid of anything since they had been born into the world, affected to be in danger of their lives.²

The Norrises were on bad terms with many officers,—with Sir William Pelham of course, with "old Reade," Lord North, Roger Williams, Hohenlo, Essex, and other nobles,—but with Sir Philip Sydney, the gentle and chivalrous, they were friends.³ Sir John had quarreled in former times, according to Leicester, with Hohenlo, and even with the "good and brave" La Noue of the Iron Arm; "for his pride," said the earl, "was the spirit of the devil."⁴ The governor complained every day of his malignity, and vowed that he "neither regarded the cause of God, nor of his prince nor country."⁵

¹ Notes of Remembrances, by Mr. Edward Norris, September, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² "His Excellency did not only not mislike withal that Lord North, Captain William, and others should rail at him, but in his own presence did suffer divers captains and noblemen to brave him, and did himself also grow in great rages against him, disallowing him openly for wise man, honest man, or soldier, preferring many men's wisdom and experience, saying his patience and slyness should not save him, not sparing openly to threaten him to hang him, so that of every honest man it is feared lest *some mischief shall shortly be wrought him.*"—Ibid.

³ Sir John Norris to Walsingham, October 25, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

⁴ Leicester to Wilkes, August 22, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

⁵ Ibid. Wilkes, on the contrary, had a very favorable opinion of

He consorted chiefly with Sir Thomas Cecil,¹ governor of Brill, son of Lord Burghley, and therefore no friend to Leicester; but the earl protested that "Master Thomas should bear small rule"² so long as he was himself governor-general. "Now I have Pelham and Stanley, we shall do well enough," he said, "though my young master would countenance him. I will be master while I remain here, will they, nill they."³

Edward Norris, brother of Sir John, gave the governor almost as much trouble as he; but the treasurer Norris, uncle to them both, was, if possible, more odious to him than all. He was, if half Leicester's accusations are to be believed, a most infamous peculator. One third of the money sent by the queen for the soldiers stuck in his fingers. He paid them their wretched fourpence a day in depreciated coin, so that for their "naughty money they could get but naughty ware."⁴ Never was such "fleecing of poor soldiers," said Leicester.⁵

On the other hand, Sir John maintained that his uncle's accounts were always ready for examination, and earnestly begged the home government not to condemn

Norris, and always secretly defended him to the queen's government against Leicester's charges. "Besides the value, wisdom, and many other good parts that are in the man," he said, "I have noted a wonderful patience and modesty in bearing many apparent injuries done unto him, which I have known to be countenanced and nourished, contrary to all reason, to disgrace him. Whatsoever may be reported maliciously to his disadvantage, I dare avouch that the queen hath not a second subject of his place and quality so able to serve in these countries as he."—Wilkes to Burghley, November 17, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

¹ Letter to Wilkes, MS. last cited.

² Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 380.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 299, 303.

⁵ Leicester to the queen, June 27, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

that functionary without a hearing.¹ For himself, he complained that he was uniformly kept in the background, left in ignorance of important enterprises, and sent on difficult duty with inadequate forces. It was believed that Leicester's course was inspired by envy, lest any military triumph that might be gained should redound to the glory of Sir John, one of the first commanders of the age, rather than to that of the governor-general. He was perpetually thwarted, crossed, calumniated, subjected to coarse and indecent insults, even from such brave men as Lord North and Roger Williams, and in the very presence of the commander-in-chief, so that his talents were of no avail, and he was most anxious to be gone from the country.²

Thus, with the tremendous opposition formed to his government in the States-General, the incessant bickerings with the Norrises, the peculations of the treasurer, the secret negotiations with Spain, and the impossibility of obtaining money from home for himself or for his starving little army, the earl was in anything but a comfortable position. He was severely censured in England; but he doubted, with much reason, whether there were many who would take his office, and spend twenty thousand pounds sterling out of their own pockets, as he had

¹ Sir J. Norris to Burghley, May 25, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Notes of Remembrances, by Mr. Edward Norris, MS. before cited. "His Excellency doth wonderfully hate my brother. . . . I only gather these causes," said Captain Norris: "first, an envy of some unworthy men about him, who put into his Excellency's head that as long as Norris were here the honor of everything would be attributed to him, and that he would be a continual hindrance to the course that his Excellency meant to hold concerning some things, neither should his Excellency have any absolute commandment as long as his credit continued."

done.¹ The earl was generous and brave as man could be, full of wit, quick of apprehension, but inordinately vain, arrogant, and withal easily led by designing persons. He stood up manfully for the cause in which he was embarked, and was most strenuous in his demands for money. "Personally he cared," he said, "not sixpence for his post, but would give five thousand sixpences, and six thousand shillings besides, to be rid of it";² but it was contrary to his dignity to "stand huckling with the states" for his salary. "Is it reason," he asked, "that I, being sent from so great a prince as our sovereign is, must come to strangers to beg my entertainment? If they are to pay me, why is there no remembrance made of it by her Majesty's letters, or some of the lords?"³

The earl and those around him perpetually and vehemently urged upon the queen to reconsider her decision and accept the sovereignty of the provinces at once. There was no other remedy for the distracted state of the country, no other safeguard for England. The Netherland people anxiously, eagerly desired it. Her Majesty was adored by all the inhabitants, who would gladly hang the fellows called the states. Lord North

¹ Leicester to the queen, June 27, 1586: "I pray God I may live to see you employ some of them that are thus careless of me, to see whether they will spend twenty thousand pounds of their own for you in seven months; but all is in mine own heart so little, though the greatest portion of all my land pay for it, so your Majesty do well accept of it," etc.

The earl expended, according to his own report to the states, three hundred thousand florins (thirty thousand pounds) in the course of the year 1587 (Bor, ii. 783. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 206). Of course he had a claim for such disbursements on the queen's exchequer, and was like to enforce it at the proper season.

² Leye. Corresp., 378.

³ Ibid., 323.

was of this opinion, so was Cavendish; Leicester had always held it. "Sure I am," he said, "there is but one way for our safety, and that is that her Majesty may take that upon her which I fear she will not."¹ Thomas Wilkes, who now made his appearance on the scene, held the same language. This distinguished civilian had been sent by the queen, early in August, to look into the state of Netherland affairs. Leicester, having expressly urged the importance of selecting as wise a politician as could be found,—because the best man in England would hardly be found a match for the dullards and drunkards, as it was the fashion there to call the Dutch statesmen,² —had selected Wilkes. After fulfilling this important special mission, he was immediately afterward to return to the Netherlands as English member of the state council, at forty shillings a day, in the place of "little Hal Killigrew," whom Leicester pronounced a "quicker and stouter fellow" than he had at first taken him for, although he had always thought well of him. The other English counselor, Dr. Bartholomew Clerk, was to remain, and the earl declared that he, too, whom he had formerly undervalued and thought to have "little stuff in him," was now "increasing greatly in understanding."³ But notwithstanding this intellectual progress, poor Bartholomew, who was no beginner, was most anxious to retire. He was a man of peace, a professor, a doctor of laws, fonder of the learned leisure and the trim gardens of England than of the scenes which now surrounded him. "I beseech your good Lordship to consider," he dismally observed to Burghley, "what a

¹ Leicester to Burghley, August 10, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Same to same, July 20, 1586.

³ Leye. Corresp., 375.

hard case it is for a man that these fifteen years hath had *vitam sedentariam* unworthily in a place judicial, always in his long robe, and who, twenty-four years since, was a public reader in the university (and therefore cannot be young), to come now among guns and drums, tumbling up and down, day and night, over waters and banks, dikes and ditches, upon every occasion that falleth out; hearing many insolences with silence, bearing many hard measures with patience—a course most different from my nature, and most unmeet for him that hath ever professed learning.”¹

Wilkes was of sterner stuff. Always ready to follow the camp and to face the guns and drums with equanimity, and endowed besides with keen political insight, he was more competent than most men to unravel the confused skein of Netherland politics. He soon found that the queen’s secret negotiations with Spain and the general distrust of her intentions in regard to the provinces were like to have fatal consequences. Both he and Leicester painted the anxiety of the Netherland people as to the intention of her Majesty in vivid colors.²

The queen could not make up her mind, in the very midst of the Greenwich secret conferences already described, to accept the Netherland sovereignty. “She gathereth from your letter,” wrote Walsingham, “that the only salve for this sore is to make herself proprietary of the country, and to put in such an army as may be able to make head to the enemy. These two things, being so contrary to her Majesty’s disposition,—the one for that it breedeth a doubt of a perpetual war, the

¹ B. Clerk to Burghley, August 11, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Wilkes to the queen, August 7, 1586. Leicester to the queen, June 27, 1586. S. P. Office MSS.

other for that it requireth an increase of charges,—do *marvelously distract her, and make her repent that ever she entered into the action.*"¹

Upon the great subject of the sovereignty, therefore, she was unable to adopt the resolution so much desired by Leicester and by the people of the provinces; but she answered the earl's communications concerning Maurice and Hohenlo, Sir John Norris and the treasurer, in characteristic but affectionate language. And thus she wrote :

“ROB : I am afraid you will suppose, by my wandering writings, that a midsummer's moon hath taken large possession of my brains this month ; but you must needs take things as they come in my head, though order be left behind me. When I remember your request to have a discreet and honest man that may carry my mind and see how all goes there, I have chosen this bearer (Thomas Wilkes), whom you know and have made good trial of. I have fraught him full of my conceits of those country matters, and imparted what way I mind to take and what is fit for you to use. I am sure you can credit him, and so I will be short with these few notes. First, that Count Maurice and Count Hollock [Hohenlo] find themselves trusted of you, esteemed of me, and to be carefully regarded, if ever peace should happen, and of that assure them on my word, that yet never deceived any. And for Norris and other captains that *voluntarily, without commandment, have many years ventured their lives and won our nation honor and themselves fame*, let them not be discouraged by any means, neither by new-come men nor by old trained soldiers elsewhere. If there be

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 340, July 9, 1586.

fault in using of soldiers, or making of profit by them, let them hear of it without open shame, and doubt not I will well chasten them therefor. It frets me not a little that the poor soldiers that hourly venture life should want their due, that well deserve rather reward; and look, in whom the fault may truly be proved, let them smart therefor. And if the treasurer be found untrue or negligent, according to desert he shall be used. But you know my old wont, that love not to discharge from office without desert. God forbid! I pray you let this bearer know what may be learned herein, and for the treasure I have joined Sir Thomas Shirley to see all this money discharged in due sort, where it needeth and behooveth.

“Now will I end, that do imagine I talk still with you, and therefore loathly say farewell one hundred thousand times, though ever I pray God bless you from all harm and save you from all foes. With my million and legion of thanks for all your pains and cares,

“As you know ever the same,

“E. R.

“P. S. Let Wilkes see that he is acceptable to you. If anything there be that W. shall desire answer of be such as you would have but me to know, write it to myself. You know I can keep both others' counsel and mine own. Mistrust not that anything you would have kept shall be disclosed by me, for although this bearer ask many things, yet you may answer him such as you shall think meet, and write to me the rest.”¹

Thus not even her favorite Leicester's misrepresentations could make the queen forget her ancient friendship

¹ Queen to Leicester, July 19, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

for "her own crow"; but meantime the relations between that "bunch of brethren," black Norris and the rest, and Pelham, Hollock, and other high officers in Leicester's army, had grown worse than ever.

One August evening there was a supper-party at Count Hollock's¹ quarters in Gertruydenberg. A military foray into Brabant had just taken place, under the lead of the count and of the lord marshal, Sir William Pelham. The marshal had requested Lord Willoughby, with his troop of horse and five hundred foot, to join in the enterprise, but, as usual, particular pains had been taken that Sir John Norris should know nothing of the affair.² Pelham and Hollock, who was "greatly in love with Mr. Pelham,"³ had invited several other gentlemen high in Leicester's confidence to accompany the expedition, and, among the rest, Sir Philip Sydney, telling him that he "should see some good service." Sydney came accordingly, in great haste, from Flushing, bringing along with him Edward Norris, that hot-headed young man, who, according to Leicester, "greatly governed his elder brother"; but they arrived at Gertruydenberg too late. The foray was over, and the party, "*having burned a village and killed some boors,*" were on their return. Sydney, not perhaps much regretting the loss of his

¹ It has been already stated that Hohenlo was uniformly called Hollach or Hollock by the English and French, and very often by the Netherlanders. In our text sometimes the one, sometimes the other, appellation is used. The reader will understand that there was but one of the name in the provinces—Count Philip William Hohenlo or Hohenlohe, oftener called Hollock.

² "Whereunto the colonel-general must not in any wise be made privy."—Advertisement of a Difference at Gertruydenberg, August 8, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

³ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 374.

share in this rather inglorious shooting-party, went down to the waterside, accompanied by Captain Norris, to meet Hollock and the other commanders.

As the count stepped on shore he scowled ominously, and looked very much out of temper.

“What has come to Hollock?” whispered Captain Patton, a Scotchman, to Sydney. “Has he a quarrel with any of the party? Look at his face! He means mischief to somebody.”

But Sydney was equally amazed at the sudden change in the German general’s countenance, and as unable to explain it.

Soon afterward the whole party—Hollock, William Louis of Nassau, Lord Carew, Lord Essex, Lord Wiltoughby, both the Sydneys, Roger Williams, Pelham, Edward Norris, and the rest—went to the count’s lodgings, where they supped, and afterward set themselves seriously to drinking.

Norris soon perceived that he was no welcome guest; for he was not, like Sydney, a stranger to the deep animosity which had long existed between Sir John Norris and Sir William Pelham and his friends. The carouse was a tremendous one, as usually was the case where Hollock was the Amphitryon, and, as the potations grew deeper, an intention became evident on the part of some of the company to behave unhandsomely to Norris.

For a time the young captain ostentatiously restrained himself, very much after the fashion of those meek individuals who lay their swords on the tavern table, with “God grant I may have no need of thee!” The custom was then prevalent at banquets for the revelers to pledge each other in rotation, each draining a great cup, and

exacting the same feat from his neighbor, who then emptied his goblet as a challenge to his next comrade.

The lord marshal took a beaker, and called out to Edward Norris: "I drink to the health of my Lord Norris, and of my lady, your mother." So saying, he emptied his glass.

The young man did not accept the pledge.

"Your Lordship knows," he said somewhat sullenly, "that I am not wont to drink deep. Mr. Sydney there can tell you that, for my health's sake, I have drank no wine these eight days. If your Lordship desires the pleasure of seeing me drunk, I am not of the same mind. I pray you at least to take a smaller glass."

Sir William insisted on the pledge. Norris then, in no very good humor, emptied his cup to the Earl of Essex.

Essex responded by draining a goblet to Count Hollock.

"A Norris's father," said the young earl, as he pledged the count, who was already very drunk, and looking blacker than ever.

"An 'orse's father—an 'orse's father," growled Hollock; "I never drink to horses, nor to their fathers either," and with this wonderful witticism he declined the pledge.

Essex explained that the toast was Lord Norris, father of the captain; but the count refused to understand, and held fiercely, and with damnable iteration, to his jest.

The earl repeated his explanation several times with no better success. Norris meanwhile sat swelling with wrath, but said nothing.

Again the lord marshal took the same great glass, and emptied it to the young captain.

Norris, not knowing exactly what course to take, placed the glass at the side of his plate, and glared grimly at Sir William.

Pelham was furious. Reaching over the table, he shoved the glass toward Norris with an angry gesture.

"Take your glass, Captain Norris," he cried; "and if you have a mind to jest, seek other companions. I am not to be trifled with; therefore, I say, pledge me at once."

"Your Lordship shall not force me to drink more wine than I list," returned the other. "It is your pleasure to take advantage of your military rank. Were we both at home, you would be glad to be my companion."

Norris was hard beset, and although his language was studiously moderate, it was not surprising that his manner should be somewhat insolent. The veteran lord marshal, on the other hand, had distinguished himself on many battle-fields, but his deportment at this banqueting-table was not much to his credit. He paused a moment, and Norris, too, held his peace, thinking that his enemy would desist.

It was but for a moment.

"Captain Norris," cried Pelham, "I bid you pledge me without more ado. Neither you nor your best friends shall use me as you list. I am better born than you and your brother, the colonel-general, and the whole of you."

"I warn you to say nothing disrespectful against my brother," replied the captain. "As for yourself, I know how to respect your age and superior rank."

"Drink, drink, drink!" roared the old marshal. "I tell you I am better born than the best of you. I have advanced you all, too, and you know it; therefore drink to me."

Sir William was as logical as men in their cups are prone to be.

"Indeed, you have behaved well to my brother Thomas," answered Norris, suddenly becoming very courteous, "and for this I have ever loved your Lordship, and would do you any service."

"Well, then," said the marshal, becoming tender in his turn, "forget what hath passed this night, and do as you would have done before."

"Very well said, indeed!" cried Sir Philip Sydney, trying to help the matter into the smoother channel toward which it was tending.

Norris, seeing that the eyes of the whole company were upon them, took the glass accordingly, and rose to his feet.

"My lord marshal," he said, "you have done me more wrong this night than you can easily make satisfaction for. But I am unwilling that any trouble or offense should grow through me. Therefore once more I pledge you."

He raised the cup to his lips. At that instant Hollock, to whom nothing had been said, and who had spoken no word since his happy remark about the horse's father, suddenly indulged in a more practical jest, and seizing the heavy gilt cover of a silver vase, hurled it at the head of Norris. It struck him full on the forehead, cutting him to the bone. The captain, stunned for a moment, fell back in his chair, with the blood running down his eyes and face. The count, always a man of few words, but prompt in action, now drew his dagger, and strode forward, with the intention of despatching him upon the spot. Sir Philip Sydney threw his arms around Hollock, however, and, with the assistance of

others in the company, succeeded in dragging him from the room. The affair was over in a few seconds.

Norris, coming back to consciousness, sat for a moment as one amazed, rubbing the blood out of his eyes, then rose from the table to seek his adversary; but he was gone.

Soon afterward he went to his lodgings. The next morning he was advised to leave the town as speedily as possible; for as it was under the government of Hollock, and filled with his soldiers, he was warned that his life would not be safe there an hour. Accordingly, he went to his boat, accompanied only by his man and his page, and so departed with his broken head, breathing vengeance against Hollock, Pelham, Leicester, and the whole crew by whom he had been thus abused.

The next evening there was another tremendous carouse at the count's, and, says the reporter of the preceding scene, "they were all on such good terms that not one of the company had falling-band or ruff left about his neck. All were clean torn away, and yet there was no blood drawn."¹

Edward Norris, so soon as might be afterward, sent a cartel to the count, demanding mortal combat with

¹ Advertisement of a Difference at Gertruydenberg, August 8, 1586. T. Doyley to Burghley, August 8, 1586. B. Clerk to same, August 11, 1586. E. Norris to Leicester, November 21, 1586. S. P. Office MSS. Compare Bor, ii. 786-788; Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 390-392.

I have painted this uproarious scene thus minutely and in detail because its consequences upon the relations between England and Holland, between Leicester, the queen, and the Norrises, Pelham, Hohenlo, and others, were so long, complicated, and important; because the brawl, although brutal and vulgar, assumed the dignity of a political matter; because, on account of the distinguished

sword and dagger.¹ Sir Philip Sydney bore the message. Sir John Norris, of course, warmly and violently espoused the cause of his brother, and was naturally more incensed against the lord marshal than ever, for Sir William Pelham was considered the cause of the whole affray. "Even if the quarrel is to be excused by drink," said an eye-witness, "'t is but a slender defense for my lord to excuse himself by his cups, and often drink doth bewray men's humors and unmask their malice. Certainly the Count Hollock thought *to have done a pleasure* to the company in killing him."²

Nothing could be more ill-timed than this quarrel, or more vexatious to Leicester. The count, although considering himself excessively injured at being challenged by a simple captain and an untitled gentleman whom he had attempted to murder, consented to waive his privilege and grant the meeting.

Leicester interposed, however, to delay and, if possible, to patch up the affair. They were on the eve of active military operations, and it was most vexatious for the commander-in-chief to see, as he said, "the quarrel with the enemy changed to private revenge among ourselves." The intended duel did not take place, for various influential personages succeeded in deferring the

personages engaged in it, and the epoch at which it occurred, the event furnishes us with a valuable interior picture of English and Dutch military life; and because, lastly, in the MSS. which I have consulted, are preserved the *ipsissima verba* of the actors in the riot. It is superfluous to repeat what has so often been stated, that no historical personage is ever made, in the text, to say or write anything save what, on ample evidence, he is known to have said or written.

¹ Bor, ubi sup. Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 474.

² Advertisement, etc., MS. already cited.

meeting. Then came the battle of Zutphen. Sydney fell, and Hollock was dangerously wounded in the attack which was soon afterward made upon the fort. He was still pressed to afford the promised satisfaction, however, and agreed to do so whenever he should rise from his bed.¹

Strange to say, the count considered Leicester, throughout the whole business, to have taken part against him.²

Yet there is no doubt whatever that the earl, who detested the Norrises and was fonder of Pelham than of any man living, uniformly narrated the story most unjustly, to the discredit of the young captain. He considered him extremely troublesome, represented him as always quarreling with some one,—with Colonel Morgan, Roger Williams, old Reade, and all the rest,—while the lord marshal, on the contrary, was depicted as the mildest of men. “This I must say,” he observed, “that all present, except my two nephews [the Sydneys], who are not here yet, declare the greatest fault to be in Edward Norris, and that he did most arrogantly use the marshal.”³

¹ Bor, ii. 786–788. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 209.

² Letter of Hohenlo, in Bor, iii. 123 seq.

³ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 391.

“In all actions,” wrote Sir J. Norris to Burghley, “I am crossed, and sought to be disgraced, and suffered to be braved by the worst and simplest in the company, only to draw me into quarrels. These things I am fain to endure, lest the hindrance of the service should be laid to my charge—a thing greatly sought for. . . . The dishonorable violence offered to my brother in Count Hollock's house is so coldly proceeded in as I fear the despair of orderly repairing his honor will drive him to a more dangerous course, and, in truth, it is used as if we were the basest in the company.”—Sir J. Norris to Burghley, August 16, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

It is plain, however, that the old marshal, under the influence of wine, was at least quite as much to blame as the young captain, and Sir Philip Sydney sufficiently showed his sense of the matter by being the bearer of Edward Norris's cartel. After Sydney's death, Sir John Norris, in his letter of condolence to Walsingham for the death of his illustrious son-in-law, expressed the deeper regret at his loss because Sir Philip's opinion had been that the Norrises were wronged.¹ Hollock had conducted himself like a lunatic, but this he was apt to do whether in his cups or not. He was always for killing some one or another on the slightest provocation, and, while the dog-star of 1586 was raging, it was not his fault if he had not already despatched both Edward Norris and the objectionable "Mr. P. B."

For these energetic demonstrations against Leicester's enemies he considered himself entitled to the earl's eternal gratitude, and was deeply disgusted at his apparent coldness. The governor was driven almost to despair by these quarrels.

His colonel-general, his lord marshal, his lieutenant-general, were all at daggers drawn. "Would God I were rid of this place!" he exclaimed. "What man living would go to the field and have his officers divided almost into mortal quarrel? One blow but by any of their lackeys brings us altogether by the ears."²

It was clear that there was not room enough on the Netherland soil for the Earl of Leicester and the brothers Norris. The queen, while apparently siding with the earl, intimated to Sir John that she did not dis-

¹ Sir J. Norris to Walsingham, October 25, 1586, S. P. Office MS. B. Clerk to Burghley, August 11, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 392.

approve his conduct, that she should probably recall him to England, and that she should send him back to the provinces after the earl had left that country.¹

Such had been the position of the governor-general toward the queen, toward the States-General, and toward his own countrymen during the year 1586.

¹ "I had not much to do," wrote Wilkes to Sir John, "to re-establish in her Majesty and Mr. Secretary a singular good opinion of you and your actions. . . . Believe me, I do not find any man on that side equal with you in her Majesty's grace. She protests to me she will not have your safety hazarded for any treasure, and hath resolved to revoke you. . . . I do find a disposition in her Majesty to return you thither again, after his Excellency shall be come home, which her Majesty meaneth directly, although there is much variety of opinion here, whether it be fit to revoke him or not. Such as *desire the good of that state do hold that question affirmatively*, but such as do not love him (who are the greater number) do maintain the negative. Her Majesty and her council do greatly stagger at the excessive charge of those wars under his Excellency's government for the past six months, affirming (as it is true) that the realm of England is not able to supply the moiety of that charge, notwithstanding the necessity of the defense of those countries is so conjoined with her Majesty's own safety as the same is not to be abandoned."—Wilkes to Sir J. Norris, September 23, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

CHAPTER XI

Drake in the Netherlands—Good results of his visit—The Babington conspiracy—Leicester decides to visit England—Exchange of parting compliments.

LATE in the autumn of the same year an Englishman arrived in the Netherlands, bearer of despatches from the queen. He had been intrusted by her Majesty with a special mission to the States-General, and he had soon an interview with that assembly at The Hague.

He was a small man, apparently forty-five years of age, of a fair but somewhat weather-stained complexion, with light-brown, closely curling hair, an expansive forehead, a clear blue eye, rather commonplace features, a thin, brown, pointed beard, and a slight mustache. Though low of stature, he was broad-chested, with well-knit limbs. His hands, which were small and nervous, were brown and callous with the marks of toil. There was something in his brow and glance not to be mistaken, and which men willingly call master; yet he did not seem to have sprung of the born magnates of the earth. He wore a heavy gold chain about his neck, and it might be observed that upon the light, full sleeves of his slashed doublet the image of a small ship on a terrestrial globe was curiously and many times embroidered.

It was not the first time that he had visited the Netherlands. Thirty years before the man had been apprentice on board a small lugger which traded between the English coast and the ports of Zealand. Emerging in early boyhood from his parental mansion,—an old boat turned bottom upward on a sandy down,—he had naturally taken to the sea, and his master, dying childless not long afterward, bequeathed to him the lugger. But in time his spirit, too much confined by coasting in the narrow seas, had taken a bolder flight. He had risked his hard-earned savings in a voyage with the old slave-trader John Hawkins,—whose exertions in what was then considered an honorable and useful vocation had been rewarded by Queen Elizabeth with her special favor, and with a coat of arms, the crest whereof was a negro's head, proper, chained,—but the lad's first and last enterprise in this field was unfortunate. Captured by Spaniards, and only escaping with life, he determined to revenge himself on the whole Spanish nation, and this was considered a most legitimate proceeding according to the "sea divinity" in which he had been schooled. His subsequent expeditions against the Spanish possessions in the West Indies were eminently successful, and soon the name of Francis Drake rang through the world, and startled Philip in the depths of his Escorial. The first Englishman, and the second of any nation, he then plowed his memorable "furrow round the earth," carrying amazement and destruction to the Spaniards as he sailed, and after three years brought to the queen treasure enough, as it was asserted, to maintain a war with the Spanish king for seven years, and to pay himself and companions, and the merchant adventurers who had participated in his enterprise, forty-seven pounds

sterling for every pound invested in the voyage. The speculation had been a fortunate one both for himself and for the kingdom.

The terrible sea-king was one of the great types of the sixteenth century. The self-helping private adventurer, in his little vessel the *Golden Hind*, one hundred tons burden, had waged successful war against a mighty empire, and had shown England how to humble Philip. When he again set foot on his native soil he was followed by admiring crowds, and became the favorite hero of romance and ballad; for it was not the ignoble pursuit of gold alone, through toil and peril, which had endeared his name to the nation. The popular instinct recognized that the true means had been found at last for rescuing England and Protestantism from the overshadowing empire of Spain. The queen visited him in his *Golden Hind*, and gave him the honor of knighthood.

The treaty between the United Netherlands and England had been followed by an embargo upon English vessels, persons, and property in the ports of Spain, and after five years of unwonted repose the privateersman again set forth with twenty-five small vessels—of which five or six only were armed—under his command, conjoined with that of General Carlisle. This time the voyage was undertaken with full permission and assistance of the queen, who, however, intended to disavow him if she should find such a step convenient.¹ This was the expedition in which Philip Sydney had desired to take part. The queen watched its result with intense anxiety, for the fate of her Netherland adventure was thought to be hanging on the issue. "Upon Drake's

¹ Leye. Corresp., 173.

voyage, in very truth, dependeth the life and death of the cause, according to man's judgment," said Walsingham.¹

The issue was encouraging, even if the voyage, as a mercantile speculation, proved not so brilliant as the previous enterprises of Sir Francis had been. He returned in the midsummer of 1586, having captured and brandschatzed San Domingo and Cartagena, and burned St. Augustine. "A fearful man to the King of Spain is Sir Francis Drake," said Lord Burghley.² Nevertheless, the queen and the lord treasurer, as we have shown by the secret conferences at Greenwich, had, notwithstanding these successes, expressed a more earnest desire for peace than ever.

A simple, seafaring Englishman, with half a dozen miserable little vessels, had carried terror into the Spanish possessions all over the earth; but even then the great queen had not learned to rely on the valor of her volunteers against her most formidable enemy.³

Drake was, however, bent on another enterprise. The preparations for Philip's great fleet had been going steadily forward in Lisbon, Cadiz, and other ports of Spain and Portugal, and, despite assurances to the contrary, there was a growing belief that England was to be invaded. To destroy those ships before the monarch's face would be, indeed, to "singe his beard." But whose arm was daring enough for such a stroke? Whose but that of the Devonshire skipper who had already accomplished so much?

¹ Leyc. Corresp., 341.

² *Ibid.*, 199.

³ For the life and adventures of Drake, see Fuller, *The Holy State and the Profane State*, in voce; Stow's *Chronicle*, 805-812; Em. v. Meteren, 175 seq.; *The World Encompassed*, and particularly the *Life, Voyages, and Exploits of Admiral Sir Francis Drake*, by John Barrow (1843).

And so Sir Francis, "a man true to his word, merciful to those under him, and hating nothing so much as idleness,"¹ had come to the Netherlands to talk over his project with the States-General and with the Dutch merchants and sea-captains.² His visit was not unfruitful. As a body the assembly did nothing, but they recommended that in every maritime city of Holland and Zealand one or two ships should be got ready to participate in all the future enterprises of Sir Francis and his comrades.³

The martial spirit of volunteer sailors, and the keen instinct of mercantile speculation, were relied upon, exactly as in England, to furnish men, ships, and money for these daring and profitable adventures. The foundation of a still more intimate connection between

¹ Fuller.

² Wagenaer, viii. 233, 234, who is, however, mistaken in saying that "they had no ears for Drake in the Netherlands."

³ "The voyage of Sir Francis Drake into these countries," wrote Wilkes, "is not likely to be unfruitful, although at his arrival he found no disposition in the states and people at all to assent of his motions. They cannot yield to assist his voyage with any general contribution, but are contented to deal with the inhabitants of the principal maritime towns, to furnish in every of them a ship or two, according to the ability of the merchants there residing, from whom the States-General, now assembled at The Hague, do expect a speedy answer and resolution; so as if her Majesty shall determine that Sir F. Drake do venture again to the Indies, it is not to be doubted that he shall have some good assistance from hence. Of what necessity it is that the queen's principal enemy be attempted that way, your Honor can best perceive; but we find it more than probable here that if he may enjoy his Indies quietly he will make her Majesty and these countries soon weary of their defense. I have partly instructed Sir F. Drake of the state of these countries. How and in what sort my Lord of Leicester departeth hence, he hath best discerned by his own experience, which because it is long

England and Holland was laid, and thenceforth Dutchmen and Englishmen fought side by side, on land and sea, wherever a blow was to be struck in the cause of human freedom against despotic Spain.

The famous Babington conspiracy, discovered by Walsingham's "travail and cost," had come to convince the queen and her counselors—if further proof were not superfluous—that her throne and life were both incompatible with Philip's deep designs, and that to keep that monarch out of the Netherlands was as vital to her as to keep him out of England. "She is forced by this discovery to countenance the cause by all outward means she may," said Walsingham, "for it appeareth unto her most plain that *unless she had entered into the action she had been utterly undone*, and that if she do not prosecute the same she cannot continue."¹ The secretary had sent Leicester information at an early day of the great secret, begging his friend to "make the letter a heretic after he had read the same," and expressing the opinion that "the matter, if well handled, would break the neck of all dangerous practices during her Majesty's reign."²

The tragedy of Mary Stuart—a sad but inevitable por-

to be written, I am bold to refer your Honor to his declaration. I do find the state of things here so disjointed and unsettled that I have just cause to fear some dangerous alteration in the absence of our governor. Therefore I beseech you, as you tender *the preservation of her Majesty's estate, depending, as you know, upon the maintenance of this*, that you will procure some speedy resolution at home, and the return of some governor of wisdom and value, to reunite these distracted provinces, who, for lack of a head, are apt enough to be the workers of their own ruin."—Wilkes to Walsingham, November 17, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 341.

² *Ibid.*, 342.

tion of the vast drama in which the emancipation of England and Holland, and, through them, of half Christendom, was accomplished—approached its catastrophe, and Leicester could not restrain his anxiety for her immediate execution. He reminded Walsingham that the great seal had been put upon a warrant for her execution for a less crime seventeen years before, on the occasion of the Northumberland and Westmoreland rebellion. “For who can warrant these villains from her,” he said, “if that person live, or shall live any time? God forbid! And be you all stout and resolute in this speedy execution, or be condemned of all the world forever. It is most certain, if you will have your Majesty safe, it must be done, for justice doth crave it besides policy.”¹ His own personal safety was deeply compromised. “Your Lordship and I,” wrote Burghley, “were very great motes in the traitors’ eyes; for your Lordship there and I here should first, about one time, have been killed. Of your Lordship they thought rather of poisoning than slaying. After us two gone, they purposed her Majesty’s death.”²

But on this great affair of state the earl was not

¹ Bruce’s Leye. Corresp., 431, October 10, 1586. See also 447.

“That the proceeding of justice against the Queen of Scots is deferred until a Parliament, whereat I do greatly marvel if it should be true, considering how dangerous such delay might be, for the mischief that might in the meantime be practised against her Majesty’s person. Though some small branches of these conspiracies be taken away, yet the greater boughs are not unknown to remain. To whom it were not good, in my opinion, to give that opportunity which might be taken, while a Parliament may be called, and such a cause debated and determined,” etc.—Leicester to Walsingham, September 9, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Bruce’s Leye. Corresp., 412, September 15, 1586.

swayed by such personal considerations. He honestly thought, as did all the statesmen who governed England, that English liberty, the very existence of the English commonwealth, was impossible so long as Mary Stuart lived.¹ Under these circumstances he was impatient, for a time at least, to leave the Netherlands. His administration had not been very successful. He had been led away by his own vanity and by the flattery of artful demagogues, but the immense obstacles with which he had to contend in the queen's wavering policy, and in the rivalry of both English and Dutch politicians, have been amply exhibited. That he had been generous, courageous, and zealous could not be denied; and, on the whole, he had accomplished as much in the field as could have been expected of him with such meager forces and so barren an exchequer.²

It must be confessed, however, that his leaving the Netherlands at that moment was a most unfortunate step, both for his own reputation and for the security of the provinces. Party spirit was running high, and a political revolution was much to be dreaded in so grave a position of affairs both in England and Holland. The arrangements, and particularly the secret arrangements,

¹ One of the Babington conspirators, Ralph Salisbury, was a tenant of Leicester's, and had "a farm under the very castle wall of Denbigh" (Leicester to Burghley, August 29, 1586, S. P. Office MS.).

² "O Lord, who would think it possible," he cried on one occasion, "for any man sent as we are, and *in action for that realm* [of England] *chiefly, and for all Christendom also*, to be so carelessly and overwillingly overthrown for ordinary wants? . . . To-morrow and to-morrow they shall have. . . . What opportunities we have lately lost! We are ready to eat our own flesh for anger, but that cannot help."—Leye. Corresp., 366.

which he made at his departure were the most fatal measures of all; but these will be described in the following chapter.

On the 31st October the earl announced to the state council his intention of returning to England, stating, as the cause of this sudden determination, that he had been summoned to attend the Parliament then sitting in Westminster. Wilkes, who was of course present, having now succeeded Killigrew as one of the two English members, observed that "the states and council used but slender entreaty to his Excellency for his stay and countenance there among them, whereat his Excellency and we that were of the council for her Majesty did not a little marvel."¹

Some weeks later, however, upon the 21st November, Leicester summoned Barneveldt and five other of the States-General to discuss the necessary measures for his departure, when those gentlemen remonstrated very earnestly upon the step, pleading the danger and confusion of affairs which must necessarily ensue. The earl declared that he was not retiring from the country because he was offended, although he had many causes for offense; and he then alluded to the Navigation Act, to the establishment of the finance council, and spoke of Burgrave and Reingault, for his employment of which individuals so much obloquy had been heaped upon his head. Burgrave he pronounced, as usual, a substantial, wise, faithful, religious personage, entitled to fullest confidence, while Reingault, who had been thrown into prison by the states on charges of fraud, speculation, and sedition, he declared to be a great financier, who had promised, on penalty of his head, to bring great sums

¹ Bruce's Leye. Corresp., 443, note.

into the treasury for carrying on the war, without any burden to the community.¹ Had he been able to do this, he had certainly a claim to be considered the greatest of financiers; but the promised "mountains of gold" were never discovered, and Reingault was now awaiting his trial.²

The deputies replied that the concessions upon the Navigation Act had satisfied the country, but that Reingault was a known instrument of the Spaniards, and Burgrave a mischief-making demagogue, who consorted with malignants and sent slanderous reports concerning the states and the country to her Majesty. They had in consequence felt obliged to write private despatches to

¹ Bor, ii. 777-779. Hoofd, 207-209. Wagenaer, viii. 183-187.

² "I must pray you and require you to be careful in satisfying the states touching Reingault," said Leicester. "I did promise upon mine honor he should be brought back again, and so I have done; but I will be no butcher to the greatest monarch in the world, much less the betrayer of a man's life, whom I myself caused to be apprehended to please them, and kept him in safe guard. And now I have been advertised of the intent in proceeding with him, and with what violence, and what some of themselves have sworn and vowed touching his death, you know, and I pray you declare, for as I will keep promise with them for the prison of the man, so do I look to have mine own honor regarded at their hands, seeing more malice than just desert against him. I take the man to have faults enough, but not capital."—Leicester to Wilkes, November 20, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

Wilkes, finding that the states of Holland were furious against Reingault and were demanding his execution, had managed to place him under the charge of the provost marshal of the English troops at Utrecht. When he had thus saved the culprit's life, he informed Barneveldt of what he had done, and that statesman severely censured the act, on the ground that grave consequences might follow this interposition in behalf of so signal an offender. Reingault's life was preserved, however, and he subsequently was

Envoy Ortel in England, not because they suspected the earl, but in order to counteract the calumnies of his chief advisers. They had urged the agent to bring the imprisonment of Paul Buys before her Majesty, but for that transaction Leicester boldly disclaimed all responsibility.¹

It was agreed between the earl and the deputies that, during his absence, the whole government, civil and military, should devolve upon the state council, and that Sir John Norris should remain in command of the English forces.²

Two days afterward Leicester, who knew very well that a legation was about to proceed to England without any previous concurrence on his part, summoned a committee of the States-General, together with Barneveldt, into the state council. Councilor Wilkes, on his behalf, then made a speech, in which he observed that more ample communications on the part of the states were to be expected. They had in previous colloquies touched upon comparatively unimportant matters, but he now begged to be informed why these commissioners were proceeding to England, and what was the nature of their instructions. Why did not they formally offer the sovereignty of the provinces to the queen without

permitted to retire to the Spanish Netherlands, where the violent democrat and Calvinist ended his days an obedient subject of Philip II. and an exemplary papist (Wilkes to Leicester, December 3 and 12, 1586, S. P. Office MS. Reyd, v. 82).

Burgrave accompanied the earl to England as his chief secretary and adviser in Netherland matters, while Deventer remained in Utrecht, principal director of the Leicestrian party, and center of all its cabals against the states.

¹ Wilkes to Leicester, etc., MS. just cited.

² Wagenaer, viii. 187.

conditions? That step had already been taken by Utrecht.¹

The deputies conferred apart for a little while, and then replied that the proposition made by Utrecht was notoriously factious, illegal, and altogether futile. Without the sanction of all the United States, of what value was the declaration of Utrecht? Moreover, the charter of that province had been recklessly violated, its government overthrown, and its leading citizens banished. The action of the province under such circumstances was not deserving of comment; but should it appear that her Majesty was desirous of assuming the sovereignty of the provinces upon reasonable conditions, the states of Holland and of Zealand would not be found backward in the business.²

Leicester proposed that Prince Maurice of Nassau should go with him to England as nominal chief of the embassy, and some of the deputies favored the suggestion. It was, however, vigorously and successfully opposed by Barneveldt, who urged that to leave the country without a head in such a dangerous position of affairs would be an act of madness.³ Leicester was much annoyed when informed of this decision. He was suspected of a design, during his absence, of converting Maurice entirely to his own way of thinking. If unsuccessful, it was believed by the advocate and by many others that the earl would cause the young prince to be detained in England as long as Philip William, his brother, had been kept in Spain. He observed peevishly that he knew how it had all been brought about.⁴

¹ Bor, ii. 780-783.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 206. Wagenaer, viii. 185.

⁴ Bor, ubi sup.

Words, of course, and handsome compliments were exchanged between the governor and the States-General on his departure. He protested that he had never pursued any private ends during his administration, but had ever sought to promote the good of the country and the glory of the queen, and that he had spent three hundred thousand florins of his own money in the brief period of his residence there.¹

The advocate, on part of the states, assured him that they were all aware that in the friendship of England lay their only chance of salvation, but that united action was the sole means by which that salvation could be effected, and the one which had enabled the late Prince of Orange to maintain a contest unequalled by anything recorded in history. There was also much disquisition on the subject of finance, the advocate observing that the states now raised as much in a month as the provinces in the time of the emperor used to levy in a year, and expressing the hope that the queen would increase her contingent to ten thousand foot and two thousand horse. He repudiated, in the name of the States-General and his own, the possibility of peace negotiations, deprecated any allusion to the subject as fatal to their religion, their liberty, their very existence, and equally disastrous to England and to Protestantism, and implored the earl, therefore, to use all his influence in opposition to any pacific overtures to or from Spain.²

On the 24th November acts were drawn up and signed by the earl, according to which the supreme government of the United Netherlands was formally committed to the state council during his absence. Decrees

¹ Bor, ii. 785. Hoofd, ubi sup.

² Bor, Hoofd, Wagenaer, ubi sup. Reyd, v. 108, 109.

were to be pronounced in the name of his Excellency, and countersigned by Maurice of Nassau.

On the following day, Leicester, being somewhat indisposed, requested a deputation of the States-General to wait upon him in his own house. This was done, and a formal and affectionate farewell was then read for him by his secretary, Mr. Atye. It was responded to in complimentary fashion by Advocate Barneveldt, who again took occasion at this parting interview to impress upon the governor the utter impossibility, in his own opinion and that of the other deputies, of reconciling the provinces with Spain.¹

Leicester received from the states, as a magnificent parting present, a silver-gilt vase "as tall as a man," and then departed for Flushing to take shipping for England.²

¹ Bor, Hoofd, Wagenaer, ubi sup. Reyd, v. 108, 109. Meteren, xiii. 238.

² Bor, ii. 754. Reyd, Holl., October 4, November 9, 442, 493. Wagenaer, viii. 173.

The vase or cup (*kop*), as it was called, had cost nine thousand florins. The states pronounced it "as singular a jewel as could be found in any of the surrounding kingdoms." It was said that on account of its size it could only have been gilded at the peril of the artisan's life (Van Wyn op Wagenaer, viii. 62).

CHAPTER XII

Ill-timed interregnum in the provinces—Firmness of the English and Dutch people—Factions during Leicester's government—Democratic theories of the Leicestrians—Suspicious as to the earl's designs—Extreme views of the Calvinists—Political ambition of the Church—Antagonism of the Church and states—The states inclined to tolerance—Desolation of the obedient provinces—Pauperism and famine—Prosperity of the Republic—The year of expectation.

It was not unnatural that the queen should desire the presence of her favorite at that momentous epoch, when the dread question, "Aut fer aut feri," had at last demanded its definite solution. It was inevitable, too, that Leicester should feel great anxiety to be upon the spot where the great tragedy, so full of fate to all Christendom, and in which his own fortunes were so closely involved, was to be enacted. But it was most cruel to the Netherlands, whose well-being was nearly as important to Elizabeth as that of her own realm, to plunge them into anarchy at such a moment. Yet this was the necessary result of the sudden retirement of Leicester.

He did not resign his government. He did not bind himself to return. The question of sovereignty was still unsettled, for it was still hoped by a large and influential party that the English queen would accept the proposed annexation. It was yet doubtful whether, during the

period of abeyance, the States-General or the States-Provincial, each within their separate sphere, were entitled to supreme authority. Meantime, as if here were not already sufficient elements of dissension and doubt, came a sudden and indefinite interregnum, a provisional, an abnormal, and an impotent government. To the state council was deputed the executive authority. But the state council was a creature of the States-General, acting in concert with the governor-general, and having no actual life of its own. It was a board of consultation, not of decision, for it could neither enact its own decrees nor interpose a veto upon the decrees of the governor.

Certainly the selection of Leicester to fill so important a post had not been a very fortunate one, and the enthusiasm which had greeted him, "as if he had been a Messiah," on his arrival, had very rapidly dwindled away as his personal character became known. The leading politicians of the country had already been aware of the error which they had committed in clothing with almost sovereign powers the delegate of one who had refused the sovereignty. They were too adroit to neglect the opportunity, which her Majesty's anger offered them, of repairing what they considered their blunder. When at last the quarrel, which looked so much like a lovers' quarrel, between Elizabeth and "sweet Robin," had been appeased to the satisfaction of Robin, his royal mistress became more angry with the states for circumscribing than she had before been for their exaggeration of his authority. Hence the implacable hatred of Leicester to Paul Buys and Barneveldt.

Those two statesmen, for eloquence, learning, readiness, administrative faculty, surpassed by few who have

ever wielded the destinies of free commonwealths, were fully equal to the task thrown upon their hands by the progress of events. That task was no slight one, for it was to the leading statesmen of Holland and England, sustained by the indomitable resistance to despotism almost universal in the English and Dutch nations, that the liberty of Europe was intrusted at that momentous epoch. Whether united under one crown, as the Netherlands ardently desired, or closely allied for aggression and defense, the two peoples were bound indissolubly together. The clouds were rolling up from the fatal south, blacker and more portentous than ever; the artificial equilibrium of forces, by which the fate of France was kept in suspense, was obviously growing every day more uncertain; but the prolonged and awful interval before the tempest should burst over the lands of freedom and Protestantism gave at least time for the prudent to prepare. The Armada was growing every day in the ports of Spain and Portugal, and Walsingham doubted as little as did Buys or Barneveldt toward what shores that invasion was to be directed. England was to be conquered in order that the rebellious Netherlands might be reduced, and Mucio was to be let slip upon the unhappy Henry III. so soon as it was thought probable that the Béarnese and the Valois had sufficiently exhausted each other. Philip was to reign in Paris, Amsterdam, London, and Edinburgh, without stirring from the Escorial. An excellent program, had there not been some English gentlemen, some subtle secretaries of state, some Devonshire skippers, some Dutch advocates and merchants, some Zealand flyboatsmen, and six million men, women, and children on the two sides of the North Sea, who had the power of expressing

their thoughts rather bluntly than otherwise in different dialects of old Anglo-Saxon speech.

Certainly it would be unjust and ungracious to disparage the heroism of the great queen when the hour of danger really came, nor would it be legitimate for us, who can scan that momentous year of expectation, 1587, by the light of subsequent events and of secret contemporaneous record, to censure or even sharply to criticize the royal hankering for peace, when peace had really become impossible. But as we shall have occasion to examine rather closely the secrets of the Spanish, French, English, and Dutch councils during this epoch, we are likely to find, perhaps, that at least as great a debt is due to the English and Dutch people, in mass, for the preservation of European liberty at that disastrous epoch as to any sovereign, general, or statesman.

For it was in the great waters of the sixteenth century that the nations whose eyes were open discovered the fountain of perpetual youth, while others who were blind passed rapidly onward to decrepitude. England was, in many respects, a despotism so far as regarded governmental forms, and no doubt the Catholics were treated with greater rigor than could be justified even by the perpetual and most dangerous machinations of the seminary priests and their instigators against the throne and life of Elizabeth. The word "liberty" was never musical in Tudor ears, yet Englishmen had blunt tongues and sharp weapons which rarely rusted for want of use. In the presence of a Parliament and the absence of a standing army, a people accustomed to read the Bible in the vernacular, to handle great questions of religion and government freely, and to bear arms at will, was most formidable to despotism. There was an

advance on the olden time. A Francis Drake, a John Hawkins, a Roger Williams, might have been sold, under the Plantagenets, like an ox or an ass. A female villain in the reign of Henry III. could have been purchased for eighteen shillings,—hardly the price of a fatted pig, and not one third the value of an ambling palfrey,—and a male villain, such an one as could in Elizabeth's reign circumnavigate the globe in his own ship or take imperial field-marshal by the beard, was worth but two or three pounds sterling in the market. Here was progress in three centuries, for the villains were now become admirals and generals in England and Holland, and constituted the mainstay of these two little commonwealths, while the commanders who governed the "invincible" fleets and armies of omnipotent Spain were all cousins of emperors, or grandees of bluest blood. Perhaps the system of the Reformation would not prove the least effective in the impending crisis.

It was most important, then, that these two nations should be united in counsel and should stand shoulder to shoulder as their great enemy advanced. But this was precisely what had been rendered almost impossible by the course of events during Leicester's year of administration, and by his sudden but not final retirement at its close. The two great national parties which had gradually been forming had remained in a fluid state during the presence of the governor-general. During his absence they gradually hardened into the forms which they were destined to retain for centuries. In the history of civil liberty, these incessant contests, these oral and written disquisitions, these sharp concussions of opinion, and the still harder blows which, unfortunately,

were dealt on a few occasions by the combatants upon each other, make the year 1587 a memorable one. The great questions of the origin of government, the balance of dynastic forces, the distribution of powers, were dealt with by the ablest heads, both Dutch and English, that could be employed in the service of the Kingdom and Republic. It was a war of protocols, arguments, orations, rejoinders, apostils, and pamphlets, very wholesome for the cause of free institutions and the intellectual progress of mankind. The reader may perhaps be surprised to see with how much vigor and boldness the grave questions which underlie all polity were handled so many years before the days of Russell and Sydney, of Montesquieu and Locke, Franklin, Jefferson, Rousseau, and Voltaire; and he may be even more astonished to find exceedingly democratic doctrines propounded, if not believed in, by trained statesmen of the Elizabethan school. He will be also apt to wonder that a more fitting time could not be found for such philosophical debate than the epoch at which both the Kingdom and the Republic were called upon to strain every sinew against the most formidable and aggressive despotism that the world had known since the fall of the Roman Empire.

The great dividing-line between the two parties, that of Leicester and that of Holland, which controlled the action of the States-General, was the question of sovereignty. After the declaration of independence and the repudiation of Philip, to whom did the sovereignty belong? To the people, said the Leicestrians. To the States-General and the States-Provincial, as legitimate representatives of the people, said the Holland party. Without looking for the moment more closely into this question, which we shall soon find ably discussed by the

most acute reasoners of the time, it is only important at present to make a preliminary reflection. The Earl of Leicester, of all men in the world, would seem to have been precluded by his own action and by the action of his queen from taking ground against the states. It was the states who, by solemn embassy, had offered the sovereignty to Elizabeth. She had not accepted the offer, but she had deliberated on the subject, and certainly she had never expressed a doubt whether or not the offer had been legally made. By the states, too, that governor-generalship had been conferred upon the earl which had been so thankfully and eagerly accepted. It was strange, then, that he should deny the existence of the power whence his own authority was derived. If the states were not sovereigns of the Netherlands, he certainly was nothing. He was but general of a few thousand English troops.

The Leicester party, then, proclaimed extreme democratic principles as to the origin of government and the sovereignty of the people. They sought to strengthen and to make almost absolute the executive authority of their chief, on the ground that such was the popular will; and they denounced with great acrimony the insolence of the upstart members of the states, half a dozen traders, hired advocates, churls, tinkers, and the like,—as Leicester was fond of designating the men who opposed him,—in assuming these airs of sovereignty.¹

¹ “They which have all authority in this state,” said an honest German traveler who happened to be in Arnheim that winter, “are for the most part merchants, orators of towns, mechanic men, ignorant, loving gain naturally, without respect of honor; . . . born to obey rather than command, who, having once tasted the sweetness of authority, have by little and little persuaded themselves that they are sovereigns; insulting over the people, and

This might, perhaps, be philosophical doctrine, had its supporters not forgotten that there had never been any pretense at an expression of the national will, except through the mouths of the states. The States-General and the States-Provincial, without any usurpation, but as a matter of fact and of great political convenience, had during fifteen years exercised the authority which had fallen from Philip's hands. The people hitherto had acquiesced in their action, and certainly there had not yet been any call for a popular convention, or any other device to ascertain the popular will. It was also difficult to imagine what was the exact entity of this abstraction called the "people" by men who expressed such extreme contempt for "merchants, advocates, town orators, churls, tinkers, and base mechanic men, born not to command, but to obey." Who were the "people" when the educated classes and the working-classes were thus carefully eliminated? Hardly the simple peasantry, the boors, who tilled the soil. At that day the agricultural laborers less than all others dreamed of popular sovereignty, and more than all others submitted to the mild authority of the states. According to the theory

controlling him to whom they had by oath referred the absolute and general government. . . . Seeing that the sovereignty really belongs to the people, to whom they are but servants and deputies, . . . I see no other remedy for this mischief but that the people be wary how they give such power and authority, and suffer it to continue so long in the hands of men of mechanic and base condition, who, grown proud with the command, abuse it daily, as well against the people as against the governors, to whom the people have referred the government both over themselves and over the whole estate."—Raymond Stockeler to a friend in England, February 15, 1587, S. P. Office MS. The letter is printed in Grimstone's *Netherlands*, 949 seq.

of the Netherland constitutions, they were supposed—and they had themselves not yet discovered the fallacies to which such doctrines could lead—to be represented by the nobles and country squires who maintained in the states of each province the general farming interests of the Republic. Moreover, the number of agricultural peasants was comparatively small. The lower classes were rather accustomed to plow the sea than the land, and their harvests were reaped from that element, which to Hollanders and Zealanders was less capricious than the solid earth. Almost every inhabitant of those sea-born territories was, in one sense or another, a mariner; for every highway was a canal; the soil was percolated by rivers and estuaries, pools and meres; the fisheries were the nurseries in which still more daring navigators rapidly learned their trade, and every child took naturally to the ocean as to its legitimate home.

The "people," therefore, thus enthroned by the Leicestrians *over all the inhabitants* of the country, appeared to many eyes rather a misty abstraction, and its claim of absolute sovereignty a doctrine almost as fantastic as that of the divine right of kings. The Netherlanders were, on the whole, a law-abiding people, preferring to conduct even a revolution according to precedent, very much attached to ancient usages and traditions, valuing the liberties, as they called them, which they had wrested from what had been superior force with their own right hands, preferring facts to theories, and feeling competent to deal with tyrants in the concrete rather than to annihilate tyranny in the abstract by a bold and generalizing phraseology. Moreover, the opponents of the Leicester party complained that the principal use to which this newly discovered "people" had been applied was to

confer its absolute sovereignty unconditionally upon one man. The "people" was to be sovereign in order that it might immediately abdicate in favor of the earl.¹

Utrecht, the capital of the Leicestrians, had already been deprived of its constitution. The magistracy was, according to law, changed every year. A list of candidates was furnished by the retiring board, an equal number of names was added by the governor of the province, and from the catalogue thus composed the governor, with his council, selected the new magistrates for the year. But De Villiers, the governor of the province, had been made a prisoner by the enemy in the last campaign; Count Meurs had been appointed provisional stadholder by the states, and during his temporary absence on public affairs the Leicestrians had seized upon the government, excluded all the ancient magistrates, banished many leading citizens from the town,

¹ Even Leicester himself was astonished at the subserviency of the democratic party. "I remember," said his confidential secretary, "that your Excellency told me once a *very wise word*—that those of Utrecht had *given you more authority than they could well do.*"

"Your council," he said further, "cannot allow of all the doings of M. Deventer and of M. Modet. True it is that they both and all those of Utrecht do love you with all their hearts, but they do many things very rashly, and do disunite themselves from the generality of the United Provinces. Insomuch that, at this present, those of the magistrates of Utrecht have disunited themselves from the states of their own province, and work every day one against another. . . . I had written to you by M. Modet and M. Rataller, but they *both stole away* secretly from hence, and surely this proceeding is not very well liked here of the best sort, as though he would have prevented the other party, and make his own reasons good first to your Excellency."—Otheman to Leicester, January 7, 1587, Brit. Museum, Galba, c. xi. p. 72, MS.

"Cupimus ut sua Excellentia (Leicestrius) *absolutè imperet*, et

and installed an entirely new board, with Gerard Proninck, called Deventer, for chief burgomaster, who was a Brabantine refugee just arrived in the province, and not eligible to office until after ten years' residence.¹

It was not unnatural that the Netherlanders, who remembered the scenes of bloodshed and disorder produced by the memorable attempt of the Duke of Anjou to obtain possession of Antwerp and other cities, should be suspicious of Leicester. Anjou, too, had been called to the provinces by the voluntary action of the states. He, too, had been hailed as a Messiah and a deliverer. In him, too, had unlimited confidence been reposed, and he had repaid their affection and their gratitude by a desperate attempt to obtain the control of their chief cities by the armed hand, and thus to constitute himself absolute sovereign of the Netherlands. The inhabitants had, after a bloody contest, averted the intended massacre and the impending tyranny; but it was not astonishing that, so very few years having elapsed since those tragical events, they should be inclined to scan severely the actions of the man who had already obtained by unconstitutional means the mastery of a most important city, and was supposed to harbor designs upon all the cities.

No doubt it was a most illiberal and unwise policy for the inhabitants of the independent states to exclude from office the wanderers for conscience' sake from the

pro sua discretionē, salva religione et privilegiis suam Majestatem non offendentibus." So ran a petition to which Deventer procured signatures among the Utrecht citizens, and then handed it to Leicester. "Such a government as that would be," says a Frisian contemporary, "was never seen in the Netherlands, and could hardly be found in Christendom."—Reyd, v. 86.

¹ Bor, ii. xxi. 722, 735. Reyd, v. 85, 86. Wagenaer, viii. 166, 168.

obedient provinces. They should have been welcomed heart and hand by those who were their brethren in religion and in the love of freedom. Moreover, it was notorious that Hohenlo, lieutenant-general under Maurice of Nassau, was a German, and that, by the treaty with England, two foreigners sat in the state council, while the army swarmed with English, Irish, and German officers in high command. Nevertheless, violently to subvert the constitution of a province, and to place in posts of high responsibility men who were ineligible, some whose characters were suspicious, and some who were known to be dangerous, and to banish large numbers of respectable burghers, was the act of a despot.¹

Besides their democratic doctrines, the Leicestrians proclaimed and encouraged an exclusive and rigid Calvinism.

¹ It was especially unfortunate that Leicester should fall so completely into the control of Deventer. That subtle politician filled the governor's mind full with spite against the States-General, inspiring him perpetually with jealousy of all bodies or individuals that interfered with his hopes of attaining arbitrary, perhaps sovereign, power. "The States-General," Deventer whispered in Leicester's ear, "are becoming more presumptuous daily. They have dared to return our old members to the assembly whom we" (after the municipal revolution) "had recalled. They have released Paul Buys. We are all marvelously scandalized, for truly these states assume more jurisdiction than was ever done by the greatest tyrant that ever usurped in this land. You shall hear many particulars by an agent which it is best not to write. . . . Let her Majesty reflect that hers will be the shame, on her head descends the scorn, and ruin to her realm will be the result. Let her break up this conspiracy by a sudden and heroic resolution; let her send your Excellency hither, with plenty of money and soldiers, and we on our side will take care not to be dishonored suddenly while waiting for your return."

Such were the prudent counsels given to Queen Elizabeth by

It would certainly be unjust and futile to detract from the vast debt which the Republic owed to the Geneva Church. The Reformation had entered the Netherlands by the Walloon gate. The earliest and most eloquent preachers, the most impassioned converts, the sublimest martyrs, had lived, preached, fought, suffered, and died with the precepts of Calvin in their hearts. The fire which had consumed the last vestige of royal and sacerdotal despotism throughout the independent Republic had been lighted by the hands of Calvinists.

Throughout the blood-stained soil of France, too, the men who were fighting the same great battle as were the Netherlanders against Philip II. and the Inquisition, the valiant cavaliers of Dauphiny and Provence, knelt on the ground before the battle, smote their iron breasts with their mailed hands, uttered a Calvinistic prayer, sang a psalm of Marot, and then charged upon Guise, or upon Leicester's chief adviser in a moment full of darkness and difficulty. To seize by violence on the cities of the provinces, to subvert their ancient constitutions, to enact, in short, all that had been done or attempted by former tyrants, was the object proposed to the English sovereign and the English governor (G. de Proninck to Leicester, January 20, 1587, Brit. Museum, Galba, c. xi. p. 95, MS.

Otheman, too, boldly assured the queen, in a letter addressed directly to her Majesty, that the "root of the whole evil in the Netherlands was the *ochlocracy* and bad government of the state," and that the reformation could only come from her. He was also of opinion that the country had been badly handled for a long time. "I believe, Madam," he observed, "that this sick person has had so many diseases for twenty years, and has had so many different doctors, — some without experience and others without fidelity, — that the more despairing the patient is of his own case, the more honor it will be to the one who cures him; and 't is your Majesty alone who can now administer the remedy."—Otheman to the queen, February 15, 1587, Brit. Museum, Galba, c. xi. p. 263, MS.

Joyeuse, under the white plume of the Béarnese. And it was on the Calvinist weavers and clothiers of Rochelle that the great prince relied in the hour of danger as much as on his mountain chivalry. In England, too, the seeds of liberty, wrapped up in Calvinism and hoarded through many trying years, were at last destined to float over land and sea, and to bear large harvests of temperate freedom for great commonwealths which were still unborn. Nevertheless, there was a growing aversion in many parts of the states for the rigid and intolerant spirit of the Reformed religion. There were many men in Holland who had already imbibed the true lesson—the only one worth learning—of the Reformation, liberty of thought; but toleration in the eyes of the extreme Calvinistic party was as great a vice as it could be in the estimation of papists. To a favored few of other habits of thought it had come to be regarded as a virtue; but the day was still far distant when men were to scorn the very word “toleration” as an insult to the dignity of man, as if for any human being or set of human beings, in caste, class, synod, or church, the right could even in imagination be conceded of controlling the consciences of their fellow-creatures.

But it was progress for the sixteenth century that there were individuals, and prominent individuals, who dared to proclaim liberty of conscience for all. William of Orange was a Calvinist, sincere and rigid, but he denounced all oppression of religion, and opened wide the doors of the commonwealth to papists, Lutherans, and Anabaptists alike. The Earl of Leicester was a Calvinist, most rigid in tenet, most edifying of conversation, the acknowledged head of the Puritan party of England, but he was intolerant and was influenced only

by the most intolerant of his sect. Certainly it would have required great magnanimity upon his part to assume a friendly demeanor toward the papists. It is easier for us, in more favored ages, to rise to the heights of philosophical abstraction, than for a man placed, as was Leicester, in the front rank of a mighty battle, in which the triumph of either religion seemed to require the bodily annihilation of all its adversaries. He believed that the success of a Catholic conspiracy against the life of Elizabeth, or of a Spanish invasion of England, would raise Mary to the throne and consign himself to the scaffold. He believed that the subjugation of the independent Netherlands would place the Spaniards instantly in England, and he frequently received information, true or false, of popish plots that were ever hatching in various parts of the provinces against the English queen.¹ It was not surprising, therefore, although it was unwise, that he should incline his ear most seriously to those who counseled severe measures

¹ "May it please your sacred Majesty," wrote Wilkes, "there is come into my hands the copy of a letter written by the Prince of Parma to the Bishop of Liège, dated 24th of last month, by the which, among other things, doth appear that there is yet some bloody purpose in hand to be executed upon your Majesty's sacred person, as by the same here inclosed doth appear. . . . It is signified by the letter that, although the exterior of the treasons and practices plotted and contrived against your Majesty be discovered, yet the core and marrow thereof is not as yet uncovered or known, whereby your enemies doubt not but to achieve in time their wicked and horrible purposes against you."—Wilkes to the queen, December 17, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

It can hardly excite surprise that the queen, receiving almost every week such intimations out of the Spanish Netherlands of attempts against her life, should desire to deal severely with seminary priests and their associates coming from those regions.

not only against papists, but against those who were not persecutors of papists, and that he should allow himself to be guided by adventurers, who wore the mask of religion only that they might plunder the exchequer and rob upon the highway.

Under the administration of this extreme party, therefore, the papists were maltreated, disfranchised, banished, and plundered.¹ The distribution of the heavy war taxes, more than two thirds of which were raised in Holland only, was confided to foreigners, and regulated mainly at Utrecht, where not one-tenth part of the same revenue was collected. This naturally excited the wrath of the merchants and manufacturers of Holland and the

¹ Yet, strange to say, it was Lord Buckhurst's opinion that the opponents of the Catholic religion were but a small minority of the Dutch people. "For the commonwealth of these provinces," wrote that envoy, "consisting of divers parts and professions, as, namely, Protestants, Puritans, Anabaptists, and Spanish hearts, which are no small number, it is most certain that, dividing this in five parts, the Protestants and Puritans do hardly *contain even one part of five*, although, at this present, the Protestants and Puritans, by having the rule and sovereignty in their hands, do wholly wage and command the captains and soldiers."—Buckhurst to the queen, May 27, 1587, printed in Cabala, or Mysteries of State, 37.

And again, in a letter to Walsingham, the same diplomatist remarks that the real object of the revolt of the Netherlanders was not to defend their religious but their civil freedom, and that Catholics and Protestants were all united to that end. "If her Majesty," he said, "should not only refuse the sovereignty, but not give sufficient aid, it is in a manner certain that the people, *not being the fifth man a Protestant*, and not making their war in truth for religion, but for *their country and liberty* only, and to resist the tyranny of Spaniards, whose hatred is ingraft in the hearts of them all, when they shall see her Majesty fail in their defense, will turn and revolt to the enemy," etc.—*Ibid.*, 11, 13, April 13, 1587.

These sweeping statements may not be strictly accurate, but

other provinces, who liked not that these hard-earned and lavishly paid subsidies should be meddled with by any but the cleanest hands.

The clergy, too, arrogated a direct influence in political affairs. Their demonstrations were opposed by the anti-Leicestrians, who cared not to see a Geneva theocracy in the place of the vanished papacy. They had as little reverence in secular affairs for Calvinistic deacons as for the college of cardinals, and would as soon accept the infallibility of Sixtus V. as that of Hermann Modet. The Reformed clergy who had dispossessed and confiscated the property of the ancient ecclesiastics who once held a constitutional place in the estates of Utrecht,—although many of those individuals were now married and had embraced the Reformed religion,—who had demolished, and sold at public auction, for twelve thousand three hundred florins,¹ the time-honored cathedral where the earliest Christians of the Netherlands had worshiped and St. Willibrord had ministered, were roundly rebuked, on more than one occasion, by the blunt Hollanders for meddling with matters beyond their sphere.²

there is no doubt that Buckhurst was struck by the general and growing feeling of mutual toleration among the adherents to the various forms of religion in Holland, and by the instinct which prompted the whole commonwealth to strike for civil and religious liberty in one. Compare Kluit, *Holl. Staatsreg.*, ii. 360, who states expressly that the majority of every town and village in the provinces were, in heart, faithful to the Roman Catholic religion.

¹ *Ibid.*, iii. xxiii. 108.

² *Ibid.*

“There is a controversy,” wrote Wilkes, “within the town and province of Utrecht (their estate being compounded of the nobility, clergy, and towns, containing three several members) between the towns and the clergy, whom the towns have inhibited to appear

The party of the States-General, as opposed to the Leicester party, was guided by the statesmen of Holland. At a somewhat later period was formed the states'-right party, which claimed sovereignty for each province, and by necessary consequence the hegemony throughout the confederacy for Holland. At present the doctrine maintained was that the sovereignty forfeited by Philip had naturally devolved upon the States-

any more in the public assemblies, meaning to cass them, upon pretense that the clergy, their third member, is a hindrance to their good proceedings. The nobility taketh part with the clergy, and do not think it fit nor agreeable with order or justice that one third member, inferior to the other two, should take upon him to depose the first member, being the clergy, without the authority of the sovereign governor or the general assent of the Union. At the beginning of the garboil, it was thought fit by this council to depute the Count Moeurs, Mons. de Meetkerk, and Dr. Hottman, persons of judgment, to hear the controversy, . . . and as they were travailing to reduce them to an accord, there came a letter to the captains of the bourgeoisie of the town of Utrecht (being the principal movers of this dissension), written by Mr. Herle, by which they have taken heart to persist obstinately in their purpose, persuading themselves that their proceedings will be avowed by her Majesty. And albeit this letter do not directly touch the matter, yet the large promises he maketh in her Majesty's name of her absolute purpose to embrace their cause, 'avec la pleine main,' as he termeth it, hath been occasion that they have uttered in public speeches that the letters of her Majesty's ambassador Herle hath given them sufficient hope that her Majesty will not mislike of their doings in going about to banish popery out of that province, which they make to be a show and countenance of their dealings; but, as I am informed, the most part of those that are of this clergy and do hold the ecclesiastical livings are married and of the religion. And in truth, as far as I can perceive, their quarrel is not against the persons of the ecclesiastics, because they are contented that the persons shall continue in their assemblies, but against the livings, which they

General. The statesmen of this party repudiated the calumny that it had therefore lapsed into the hands of half a dozen mechanics and men of low degree. The states of each province were, they maintained, composed of nobles and country gentlemen, as representing the agricultural interest, and of deputies from the vroed-

mean to convert to some other uses. And although, for mine own poor opinion, I think the church livings were most fitly to be converted to the defense of the public cause, yet the manner of the doing thereof should be speedily prevented, for all men of judgment here are of opinion that if it be not stayed it will hazard the loss of the town, and consequently of the whole province. I am informed that the magistrates of Utrecht have despatched toward my lord general and her Majesty one Hermann Modet, their chief minister, to acquaint them with the matter, and to make good their proceedings. The said Modet, by the report of M. de Villiers, the minister, and Saravia, a great learned preacher of Leyden, is taken to be the greatest mutine in all these countries; and it is avouched by them and others of the best condition that he was the only occasion of the loss of Ghent, upon the like matter begun by him within the town. The Prince of Orange, in his time, could never brook the same Modet, and, as the Count Maurice telleth me, he did always oppose himself against the counsel and designs of the prince, his father. I thought it not unfit to give you this taste of the condition of Modet, because I know that my Lord North, Mr. Killigrew, and Mr. Webbe have greatly supported him in his humors at Utrecht, and it is not to be doubted that they will do the like at home."—Wilkes to Walsingham, December 24, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

Such letters, written on the spot, by a man thoroughly acquainted with Netherland politics, and the experienced, faithful representative of her Majesty in the state council, explain the intrigues and the instruments of the Leicestrian party. It was by honest and lucid expositions like these that the writer incurred the deadly hatred of the earl, and was in danger of losing his life. Compare Bor and Reyd, *ubi sup.*; *Le Petit*, ii. xiv. 533; *Wage-naer*, viii. 168.

schappen, or municipal governments, of every city and smallest town.

Such men as Adrian van der Werf, the heroic burgo-master of Leyden during its famous siege, John van der Does, statesman, orator, soldier, poet, Adolphus Meeterken, judge, financier, politician, Carl Roorda, Noël de Caron, diplomatist of most signal ability, Floris Thin, Paul Buys, and Olden-Barneveldt, with many others, who would have done honor to the legislative assemblies and national councils in any country or any age, were constantly returned as members of the different vroedschaps in the commonwealth.

So far from its being true, then, that half a dozen ignorant mechanics had usurped the sovereignty of the provinces after the abjuration of the Spanish king, it may be asserted, in general terms, that of the eight hundred thousand inhabitants of Holland at least eight hundred persons were always engaged in the administration of public affairs, that these individuals were perpetually exchanged for others, and that those whose names became most prominent in the politics of the day were remarkable for thorough education, high talents, and eloquence with tongue and pen.¹ It was acknowledged by the leading statesmen of England and France, on repeated occasions throughout the sixteenth century, that the diplomatists and statesmen of the Netherlands were even more than a match for any politicians who were destined to encounter them, and the profound respect which Leicester expressed for these solid statesmen, these "substantial, wise, well-languaged" men, these "big fellows," so soon as he came in contact with them, and before he began to hate them for outwitting

¹ Kluit, Holl. Staatsregeering, ii. 203.

him, has already appeared. They were generally men of the people, born without any of the accidents of fortune; but the leaders had studied in the common schools, and later in the noble universities, of a land where to be learned and eloquent was fast becoming almost as great an honor as to be wealthy or high-born.

The executive, the legislative, and the judiciary departments were more carefully and scientifically separated than could perhaps have been expected in that age. The lesser municipal courts, in which city senators presided, were subordinate to the Supreme Court of Holland, whose officers were appointed by the stadholders and council; the supplies were in the hands of the States-Provincial, and the supreme administrative authority was confided to a stadholder appointed by the states.

The States-General were constituted of similar materials to those of which the States-Provincial were constructed, and the same individuals were generally prominent in both. They were deputies appointed by the Provincial Estates, were in truth rather more like diplomatic envoys than senators, were generally bound very strictly by instructions, and were often obliged, by the jealousy springing from the states'-right principle, to refer to their constituents on questions when the times demanded a sudden decision, and when the necessary delay was inconvenient and dangerous.

In religious matters the states party, to their honor, already leaned to a wide toleration. Not only Catholics were not burned, but they were not banished, and very large numbers remained in the territory, and were quite undisturbed in religious matters within their own doors. There were even men employed in public affairs who were suspected of papistical tendencies, although their

hostility to Spain and their attachment to their native land could not fairly be disputed. The leaders of the states party had a rooted aversion to any political influence on the part of the clergy of any denomination whatever. Disposed to be lenient to all forms of worship, they were disinclined to an established church, but still more opposed to allowing church influence in secular affairs. As a matter of course, political men with such bold views in religious matters were bitterly assailed by their rigid opponents. Barneveldt, with his "Nil scire tutissima fides," was denounced as a disguised Catholic or an infidel, and as for Paul Buys, he was a "bolsterer of papists, an atheist, a devil," as it has long since been made manifest.

Nevertheless, these men believed that they understood the spirit of their country and of the age. In encouragement to an expanding commerce, the elevation and education of the masses, the toleration of all creeds, and a wide distribution of political functions and rights, they looked for the salvation of their nascent Republic from destruction, and the maintenance of the true interests of the people. They were still loyal to Queen Elizabeth, and desirous that she should accept the sovereignty of the provinces. But they were determined that the sovereignty should be a constitutional one, founded upon and limited by the time-honored laws and traditions of their commonwealth; for they recognized the value of a free republic with an hereditary chief, however anomalous it might in theory appear. They knew that in Utrecht the Leicestrian party were about to offer the queen the sovereignty of their province *without conditions*, but they were determined that neither Queen Elizabeth nor any other monarch should ever reign in the

Netherlands, *except* under conditions to be very accurately defined and well secured.

Thus contrasted, then, were the two great parties in the Netherlands at the conclusion of Leicester's first year of administration. It may easily be understood that it was not an auspicious moment to leave the country without a chief.

The strength of the states party lay in Holland, Zealand, Friesland. The mainstay of the democratic or Leicester faction was in the city of Utrecht, but the earl had many partizans in Gelderland, Friesland, and in Overijssel, the capital of which province, the wealthy and thriving Deventer, second only in the Republic to Amsterdam for commercial and political importance, had been but recently secured for the provinces by the vigorous measures of Sir William Pelham.

The condition of the Republic and of the Spanish provinces was at that moment most signally contrasted. If the effects of despotism and of liberty could ever be exhibited at a single glance, it was certainly only necessary to look for a moment at the picture of the obedient and of the rebel Netherlands.

Since the fall of Antwerp, the desolation of Brabant, Flanders, and of the Walloon territories had become complete. The king had recovered the great commercial capital, but its commerce was gone. The Schelde, which, till recently, had been the chief mercantile river in the world, had become as barren as if its fountains had suddenly dried up. It was as if it no longer flowed to the ocean, for its mouth was controlled by Flushing. Thus Antwerp was imprisoned and paralyzed. Its docks and basins, where twenty-five hundred ships had once been counted, were empty, grass was growing in its streets,

its industrious population had vanished, and the Jesuits had returned in swarms. And the same spectacle was presented by Ghent, Bruges, Valenciennes, Tournay, and those other fair cities which had once been types of vigorous industry and tumultuous life. The sea-coast was in the hands of two rising commercial powers, the great and free commonwealths of the future. Those powers were acting in concert and commanding the traffic of the world, while the obedient provinces were excluded from all foreign intercourse and all markets as the result of their obedience. Commerce, manufactures, agriculture, were dying lingering deaths. The thrifty farms, orchards, and gardens, which had been a proverb and wonder of industry, were becoming wildernesses. The demand for their produce by the opulent and thriving cities, which had been the workshops of the world, was gone. Foraging bands of Spanish and Italian mercenaries had succeeded to the famous tramp of the artisans and mechanics, which had often been likened to an army, but these new customers were less profitable to the gardeners and farmers. The clothiers, the fullers, the tapestry-workers, the weavers, the cutlers, had all wandered away, and the cities of Holland, Friesland, and of England were growing skilful and rich by the lessons and the industry of the exiles to whom they afforded a home. There were villages and small towns in the Spanish Netherlands that had been literally depopulated. Large districts of country had gone to waste, and cane-brakes and squalid morasses usurped the place of yellow harvest-fields. The fox, the wild boar, and the wolf infested the abandoned homes of the peasantry; children could not walk in safety in the neighborhood even of the larger cities; wolves littered their young in

the deserted farm-houses; two hundred persons, in the winter of 1586-87, were devoured by wild beasts in the outskirts of Ghent.¹ Such of the remaining laborers and artisans as had not been converted into soldiers found their most profitable employment as brigands, so that the portion of the population spared by war and emigration was assisting the enemy in preying upon their native country. Brandschatzung, burglary, highway robbery, and murder had become the chief branches of industry among the working-classes. Nobles and wealthy burghers had been changed to paupers and mendicants. Many a family of ancient lineage, and once of large possessions, could be seen begging their bread, at the dusk of evening, in the streets of great cities where they had once exercised luxurious hospitality, and they often begged in vain.²

For while such was the forlorn aspect of the country—and the portrait, faithfully sketched from many contemporary pictures, has not been exaggerated in any of its dark details—a great famine smote the land with its additional scourge. The whole population, soldiers and brigands, Spaniards and Flemings, beggars and workmen, were in danger of perishing together. Where the want of employment had been so great as to cause a rapid depopulation, where the demand for labor had almost entirely ceased, it was a necessary result that, during the process, prices should be low, even in the presence of foreign soldiery, and despite the inflamed profits which such capitalists as remained required, by

¹ Bor, ii. xxii. 984, 985. Meteren, xiv. 253. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 251. Wagenaer, viii. 224, 225. Van Wyn op Wagenaer, viii. 67.

“The bedsteads of the abandoned cottages,” says Meteren, “swarmed with little wolves” (ubi sup.).

² Bor, Meteren, Hoofd, Wagenaer.

way not only of profit but insurance, in such troublous times. Accordingly, for the last year or two, the price of rye at Antwerp and Brussels had been one florin for the veertel (three bushels) of one hundred and twenty pounds; that of wheat, about one third of a florin more. Five pounds of rye, therefore, were worth one penny sterling, reckoning, as was then usual, two shillings to the florin. A pound weight of wheat was worth about one farthing.¹ Yet this was forty-one years after the discovery of the mines of Potosi (A. D. 1545), and full sixteen years after the epoch from which is dated that rapid fall in the value of silver which in the course of seventy years caused the average price of corn and of all other commodities to be tripled or even quadrupled. At that very moment the average cost of wheat in England was sixty-four shillings the quarter, or about seven and sixpence sterling the bushel,² and in the markets of Holland, which in truth regulated all others, the same prices prevailed.³ A bushel of wheat in England was equal, therefore, to eight bushels in Brussels.

¹ A contemporary chronicler has preserved a droll medley of prices in the Netherlands in the year 1548, but one which, if accurate, furnishes a striking instance of the low money valuation of the various necessaries of life before the great revolution in the value of silver had begun. For one hundred and sixty florins (sixteen pounds) there were bought a last (one hundred and eight bushels, or eighty bushels English) of wheat, a last of rye, a last of barley, a last of oats, a quarter hundredweight of butter, three hundred pounds of lard, one hundred cheeses, a doublet, a pair of shoes, a bonnet, a bag, a barrel of excellent beer, and there were six stivers over for drink-money. "And let this serve as a memorial," he piously observes, "of how much the wrath of God and how much his benignity can do for us."—Meteren, xiv. 253.

² Tables in McCulloch's edition of Adam Smith, p. 117.

³ Bor, Meteren. A veertel is about three bushels. A florin

Thus the silver-mines, which were the Spanish king's property, had produced their effect everywhere more signally than within the obedient provinces. The South American specie found its way to Philip's coffers, thence to the paymasters of his troops in Flanders, and thence to the commercial centers of Holland and England. Those countries, first to feel and obey the favorable expanding impulse of the age, were moving surely and steadily on before it to greatness. Prices were rising with unexampled rapidity, the precious metals were comparatively a drug, a world-wide commerce, such as had never been dreamed of, had become an every-day concern, the arts and sciences and a most generous culture in famous schools and universities, which had been founded in the midst of tumult and bloodshed, characterized the Republic, and the golden age of English poetry, which was to make the Elizabethan era famous through all time, had already begun.

In the Spanish Netherlands the newly found treasure served to pay the only laborers required in a subjugated and almost deserted country, the pikemen of Spain and Italy and the reiters of Germany. Prices could not sustain themselves in the face of depopulation. Where there was no security for property, no home market, no foreign intercourse, industrial pursuits had become almost impossible. The small demand for labor had caused it, as it were, to disappear altogether. All men had become beggars, brigands, or soldiers. A tempo-

was then always reckoned at two shillings sterling. The price of a bushel of rye at Brussels and Antwerp was therefore eightpence; that of a bushel of wheat about one third more, say elevenpence, or seven and fourpence for the quarter (eight bushels), about an eighth or ninth of the price in England and Holland.

rary reaction followed. There were no producers. Suddenly it was discovered that no corn had been planted, and that there was no harvest. A famine was the inevitable result. Prices then rose with most frightful rapidity. The veertel of rye, which in the previous year had been worth one florin at Brussels and Antwerp, rose in the winter of 1586-87 to twenty, twenty-two, and even twenty-four florins; and wheat advanced from one and one third florins to thirty-two florins the veertel.¹ Other articles were proportionally increased in market value; but it is worthy of remark that mutton was quoted in the midst of the famine at nine stivers (a little more than ninepence sterling) the pound, and beef at fivepence, while a single codfish sold for twenty-two florins.² Thus wheat was worth sixpence sterling the pound weight (reckoning the veertel of one hundred and twenty pounds at thirty florins), which was a penny more than the price of a pound of beef, while an ordinary fish was equal in value to one hundred and six pounds of beef.³ No better evidence could be given that the obedient provinces were relapsing into barbarism than that the only agricultural industry then practised was to allow what flocks and herds were remaining to graze at will over the ruined farms and gardens, and that their fishermen were excluded from the sea.

The evil cured itself, however, and before the expira-

¹ Bor, Meteren, Hoofd, ubi sup. A last of rye is quoted by Meteren (xiv. 253^{vo}) at eight hundred florins. A last is equal to eighty bushels English measure. This is just ten florins, or one pound sterling, the bushel for rye, and one third more, or twenty-seven shillings,—that is to say, £10 16s. the quarter,—for wheat.

² Bor, Hoofd, Meteren, ubi sup.

³ Ibid.

tion of another year prices were again at their previous level. The land was sufficiently cultivated to furnish the necessaries of life for a diminishing population, and the supply of labor was more than enough for the languishing demand. Wheat was again at tenpence the bushel, and other commodities valued in like proportion, and far below the market prices in Holland and England.

On the other hand, the prosperity of the Republic was rapidly increasing. Notwithstanding the war, which had been raging for a terrible quarter of a century without any interruption, population was increasing, property rapidly advancing in value, labor in active demand. Famine was impossible to a state which commanded the ocean. No corn grew in Holland and Zealand, but their ports were the granary of the world. The fisheries were a mine of wealth almost equal to the famous Potosi, with which the commercial world was then ringing. Their commerce with the Baltic nations was enormous. In one month eight hundred vessels left their havens for the eastern ports alone. There was also no doubt whatever—and the circumstance was a source of constant complaint and of frequent ineffective legislation—that the rebellious provinces were driving a most profitable trade with Spain and the Spanish possessions, in spite of their revolutionary war. The mines of Peru and Mexico were as fertile for the Hollanders and Zealanders as for the Spaniards themselves. The war paid for the war; one hundred large frigates were constantly cruising along the coasts to protect the fast-growing traffic, and an army of twenty thousand foot-soldiers and two thousand cavalry were maintained on land. There were more ships and sailors at that moment in Hol-

land and Zealand than in the whole kingdom of England.¹

While the seaports were thus rapidly increasing in importance, the towns in the interior were advancing as steadily. The woolen manufacture, the tapestry, the embroideries of Gelderland and Friesland and Overysel, were becoming as famous as had been those of Tourney, Ypres, Brussels, and Valenciennes. The emigration from the obedient provinces and from other countries was very great. It was difficult to obtain lodgings in the principal cities; new houses, new streets, new towns, were rising every day. The single province of Holland furnished regularly, for war expenses alone, two millions of florins (two hundred thousand pounds) a year, besides frequent extraordinary grants for the same purpose, yet the burden imposed upon the vigorous young commonwealth seemed only to make it the more elastic. "The coming generations may see," says a contemporary historian, "the fortifications erected at that epoch in the cities, the costly and magnificent havens, the docks, the great extension of the cities; for truly *the war had become a great benediction* to the inhabitants."²

Such a prosperous commonwealth as this was not a prize to be lightly thrown away. There is no doubt whatever that a large majority of the inhabitants, and

¹ Six years later it was asserted by the magistrates of Amsterdam, in a communication made to the States-General, that "no one could doubt that, in regard to the mercantile marine and the amount of tonnage, the provinces were so far superior to England that *hardly any comparison could be made on the subject*," etc. (Koop vaardy Schepen in Nederland a° 1593, Brief v. d. Burgemeesteren en Raaden der Stad Amsterdam aan de Staten-Generaal, Hague Archives MS.).

² Meteren, xiv. 253^{vo}.

of the states by whom the people were represented, ardently and affectionately desired to be annexed to the English crown. Leicester had become unpopular, but Elizabeth was adored, and there was nothing unreasonable in the desire entertained by the provinces of retaining their ancient constitutions and of transferring their allegiance to the English queen.

But the English queen could not resolve to take the step. Although the great tragedy which was swiftly approaching its inevitable catastrophe, the execution of the Scottish queen, was to make peace with Philip impossible, even if it were imaginable before, Elizabeth, during the year 1587, was earnestly bent on peace. This will be made manifest in subsequent pages by an examination of the secret correspondence of the court. Her most sagacious statesmen disapproved her course, opposed it, and were often overruled, although never convinced, for her imperious will would have its way.

The States-General loathed the very name of peace with Spain. The people loathed it. All knew that peace with Spain meant the exchange of a thriving, prosperous commonwealth, with freedom of religion, constitutional liberty, and self-government, for provincial subjection to the Inquisition and to despotism. To dream of any concession from Philip on the religious point was ridiculous. There was a mirror ever held up before their eyes by the obedient provinces, in which they might see their own image, should they, too, return to obedience. And there was never a pretense, on the part of any honest adviser of Queen Elizabeth in the Netherlands, whether Englishman or Hollander, that the idea of peace negotiation could be tolerated for a moment by states or people. Yet the sum of the queen's policy for the year

1587 may be summed up in one word—peace; peace for the provinces, peace for herself, with their implacable enemy.

In France, during the same year of expectation, we shall see the long prologue to the tragic and memorable 1588 slowly enacting, the same triangular contest between the three Henrys and their partizans still proceeding. We shall see the misguided and wretched Valois lamenting over his victories and rejoicing over his defeats, forced into hollow alliance with his deadly enemy, arrayed in arms against his only protector and the true champion of the realm, and struggling vainly in the toils of his own mother and his own secretary of state, leagued with his most powerful foes. We shall see Mucio, with one hand extended in mock friendship toward the king, and with the other thrust backward to grasp the purse of three hundred thousand crowns held forth to aid his fellow-conspirator's dark designs against their common victim; and the Béarnese, ever with lance in rest, victorious over the wrong antagonist, foiled of the fruits of victory, proclaiming himself the English queen's devoted knight, but railing at her parsimony; always in the saddle, always triumphant, always a beggar, always in love, always cheerful, and always confident to outwit the Guises and Philip, Parma and the pope.

And in Spain we shall have occasion to look over the king's shoulder as he sits at his study table, in his most sacred retirement; and we shall find his policy for the year 1587 summed up in two words—invasion of England. Sincerely and ardently as Elizabeth meant peace with Philip, just so sincerely did Philip intend war with England, and the dethronement and destruction of the

queen. To this great design all others were now subservient, and it was mainly on account of this determination that there was sufficient leisure in the Republic for the Leicestrians and the States-General to fight out so thoroughly their party contests.

CHAPTER XIII

Barneveldt's influence in the provinces—Unpopularity of Leicester—Intrigues of his servants—Gossip of his secretary—Its mischievous effects—The quarrel of Norris and Hollock—The earl's participation in the affair—His increased animosity to Norris—Seizure of Deventer—Stanley appointed its governor—Yorke and Stanley—Leicester's secret instructions—Wilkes remonstrates with Stanley—Stanley's insolence and equivocation—Painful rumors as to him and Yorke—Duplicity of Yorke—Stanley's banquet at Deventer—He surrenders the city to Tassis—Terms of the bargain—Feeble defense of Stanley's conduct—Subsequent fate of Stanley and Yorke—Betrayal of Guelders to Parma—These treasons cast odium on the English—Miserable plight of the English troops—Honesty and energy of Wilkes—Indignant discussion in the assembly.

THE government had not been laid down by Leicester on his departure. It had been provisionally delegated, as already mentioned, to the state council. In this body, consisting of eighteen persons, originally appointed by the earl, on nomination by the states, several members were friendly to the governor, and others were violently opposed to him. The states of Holland, by whom the action of the States-General was mainly controlled, were influenced in their action by Buys and Barneveldt. Young Maurice of Nassau, nineteen years of age, was stadholder of Holland and Zealand—a florid-complexioned, fair-haired young man, of sanguine-bilious tem-

perament; reserved, quiet, reflective, singularly self-possessed; meriting at that time more than his father had ever done the appellation of the taciturn; discreet, sober, studious. "Count Maurice saith but little, but I cannot tell what he thinketh," wrote Leicester's eaves-dropper-in-chief.¹ Mathematics, fortification, the science of war—these were his daily pursuits. "The sapling was to become the tree," and meantime the youth was preparing for the great destiny which, he felt, lay before him. To ponder over the works and the daring conceptions of Stevinus, to build up and to batter the wooden blocks of mimic citadels, to arrange in countless combinations great armies of pewter soldiers—these were the occupations of his leisure hours. Yet he was hardly suspected of bearing within him the germs of the great military commander. "Small desire hath Count Maurice to follow the wars," said one who fancied himself an acute observer at exactly this epoch. "And whereas it might be supposed that, in respect to his birth and place, he would affect the chief military command in these countries, it is *found, by experience had of his humor, that there is no chance of his entering into competition with the others.*"² A modest young man, who could bide his time,—but who, meanwhile, under the guidance of his elders, was doing his best, both in field and cabinet, to learn the great lessons of the age,—he had already enjoyed much solid practical instruction under such a desperate fighter as Hohenlo and under so profound a statesman as Barneveldt. For at this epoch Olden-Barneveldt was the preceptor, almost the political patron, of

¹ Otheman to Leicester, Brit. Museum, Galba, c. xi. p. 216, February 1, 1587, MS.

² Project for the Government of the Provinces, Cabala, 23.

Maurice, and Maurice, the official head of the Holland party, was the declared opponent of the democratic-Calvinist organization. It is not necessary, at this early moment, to foreshadow the changes which time was to bring. Meantime it would be seen, perhaps ere long, whether or no it would be his humor to follow the wars. As to his prudent and dignified deportment there was little doubt. "Count Maurice behaveth himself very discreetly all this while," wrote one, who did not love him, to Leicester, who loved him less. "He cometh every day to the council, keeping no company with Count Hollock, nor with any of them all, and never drinks himself full with any of them, as they do every day among themselves."¹

Certainly the most profitable intercourse that Maurice could enjoy with Hohenlo was upon the battle-field. In winter quarters that hard-fighting, hard-drinking, and most turbulent chieftain was not the best mentor for a youth whose destiny pointed him out as the leader of a free commonwealth. After the campaigns were over—if they ever could be over—the count and other nobles from the same country were too apt to indulge in those mighty potations which were rather characteristic of their nation and the age.

"Since your Excellency's departure," wrote Leicester's secretary, "there hath been among the Dutch counts nothing but dancing and drinking, to the grief of all this people, which foresee that there can come no good of it; specially Count Hollock, who hath been drunk almost a fortnight together."²

¹ Otheman to Leicester, January 16, 1587, Brit. Museum, Galba, c. xi. p. 99, MS.

² Same to same, January 7, 1587, *ibid.*, p. 72, MS.

Leicester had rendered himself unpopular with the States-General and with all the leading politicians and generals, yet at that moment he had deeply mortgaged his English estates in order to raise funds to expend in the Netherland cause. Thirty thousand pounds sterling, according to his own statement, he was already out of pocket, and unless the queen would advance him the means to redeem his property, his broad lands were to be brought to the hammer.¹ But it was the queen, not the States-General, who owed the money, for the earl had advanced these sums as a portion of the royal contingent. Five hundred and sixty thousand pounds sterling had been the cost of one year's war during the English governor's administration, and of this sum one hundred and forty thousand had been paid by England.² There was a portion of the sum, over and above their monthly levies, for which the states had contracted a debt, and they were extremely desirous to obtain, at that moment, an additional loan of fifty thousand pounds from Elizabeth, a favor which Elizabeth was very firmly determined not to grant. It was this terror at the expense into which the Netherland war was plunging her which made the English sovereign so desirous for peace,

¹ "List of the Earl of Leicester's mortgages to raise money spent in doing her Majesty service in the Low Countries," 1587, S. P. Office MS.

There were five different mortgages of estates and manors in England, amounting in all to eighteen thousand pounds. "All the mortgages above written are past redemption, except on present payment of the due debts. His Lordship doth owe an infinite sum besides for his expenses made in these services, over and besides these debts."

² Wilkes to Walsingham, January 12, 1587. Same to Burghley, January 12, 1587. S. P. Office MSS.

and filled the anxious mind of Walsingham with the most painful forebodings.

Leicester, in spite of his good qualities,—such as they were,—had not that most necessary gift for a man in his position, the art of making friends. No man made so many enemies. He was an excellent hater, and few men have been more cordially hated in return. He was imperious, insolent, hot-tempered. He could brook no equal. He had also the fatal defect of enjoying the flattery of his inferiors in station. Adroit intriguers burned incense to him as a god, and employed him as their tool. And now he had mortally offended Hohenlo and Buys and Barneveldt, while he hated Sir John Norris with a most passionate hatred. Wilkes, the English representative, was already a special object of his aversion. The unvarnished statements made by the stiff councilor of the expense of the past year's administration and the various errors committed had inspired Leicester with such ferocious resentment that the friends of Wilkes trembled for his life.¹ Cordiality between the governor-general and Count Maurice had become impossible. As for Willoughby and Sir William Pelham, they were both

¹ "It is generally bruited here," wrote Henry Smith to his brother-in-law Wilkes, "of a most heavy displeasure conceived by my Lord of Leicester against you, and it is said to be so great as that he hath protested to be revenged of you; and to procure you the more enemies, it is said he hath revealed to my lord treasurer and Secretary Davison some injurious speeches (which I cannot report) you should have used of them to him at your last being with him. Furthermore, some of the said lord's secretaries have reported here that it were good for you never to return hither, or, if their lord be appointed to go over again, it will be too hot for you to tarry there. These things, thus coming to the ears of your friends, have stricken a great fear and grief into the minds of such as love you, lest the wonderful force and authority

friendly to him; but Willoughby was a magnificent cavalry officer, who detested politics and cared little for the Netherlands, except as the best battle-field in Europe, and the old marshal of the camp, the only man that Leicester ever loved, was growing feeble in health, was broken down by debt, and hardly possessed, or wished for, any general influence.

of this man, being bent against you, should do you hurt, while there is none to answer for you."—Smith to Wilkes, January 26, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

Wilkes immediately wrote to Lord Burghley, indignantly denying that he had ever spoken disrespectfully or injuriously of him, as thus meanly reported of him by Leicester.

"I do briefly assure your Lordship," he said, "which I will avow with mine oath upon the Holy Testament, that I am therein as falsely and injuriously abused as ever was poor man, and, upon that protestation, I utterly deny that ever I advised my lord to beware of your Lordship, or of any counselor at your devotion, or that I ever used unto him, or to any creature living, any vile, uncivil, lewd, or undutiful term of your Lordship. I trust in the observation you have made of my conversation, serving her Majesty a dozen years under your wing, did never see that I was so indiscreet as to speak irreverently of men of your Lordship's place, and I hope you have not found me so foolish as by such lightness to draw myself into the hatred of so great personages, to overthrow myself wilfully. I thank God I was never so mad, and I might speak it without vaunt, that there was no man in court of my sort that had more good will of high and low than myself, before the acceptance of this cursed and unfortunate journey, which, as I declared to your Lordship at the beginning, will be, I fear, the cause of my ruin; and then it pleased you to give me this advice, that I should serve her Majesty truly, and refer the rest to God. Your Lordship doth know the humors and disposition of my great adversary better than I, and can judge thereof accordingly, which, with silence, I will leave to plead for me in your grave conceit, together with the unlikelihood that I, having no cause of offense and finding you my good lord, and that I am not mad, or used to

Besides Deventer of Utrecht, then, on whom the earl chiefly relied during his absence, there were none to support him cordially except two or three members of the states council. "Madame de Brederode hath sent unto you a kind of rose," said his intelligencer, "which you have asked for, and beseeches you to command anything she has in her garden, or whatsoever. M. Meetkerken, M. Brederode, and Mr. Dorius wish your return with all their hearts. For the rest I cannot tell, and will not swear. But Mr. Barneveldt is not your very great friend, whereof I can write no more at this time."¹

This certainly was a small proportion out of a council of eighteen, when all the leading politicians of the country were in avowed hostility to the governor. And thus the earl was, at this most important crisis, to depend upon the subtle and dangerous Deventer, and upon two inferior personages, the "fellow Junius"² and a nondescript, whom Hohenlo characterized as a "long, lean Englishman, with a little black beard."³ This meager individual, however, seems to have been of somewhat

precipitate myself in that manner, should in any probability be so great an enemy to myself as to make your Lordship my foe by any such levity. . . . Your Lordship hath herein dealt with me according to yourself, that you have not directly condemned me before you heard me. . . . If my adversary were as mean in quality as myself, I would not doubt but, by God's grace and help, to make mine innocency appear upon him with my hand."—Wilkes to Burghley, February 17, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

Thus it appears that the lord treasurer's conduct toward the councillor, who had been taking his advice of "serving her Majesty truly and referring the rest to God," was as honorable as that of Leicester was base.

¹ Otheman to Leicester, January 16, 1587, MS. already cited.

² Common expression of Hohenlo (Bor, iii. xxiii. 28).

³ *Ibid.*, MS. last cited.

doubtful nationality. He called himself Otheman, claimed to be a Frenchman, had lived much in England, wrote with great fluency and spirit both in French and English, but was said, in reality, to be named Robert Dale.¹

It was not the best policy for the representative of the English queen to trust to such counselors at a moment when the elements of strife between Holland and England were actively at work, and when the safety, almost the existence, of the two commonwealths depended upon their acting cordially in concert. "Overyssel, Utrecht, Friesland, and Gelderland have agreed to renew the offer of sovereignty to her Majesty," said Leicester. "I shall be able to make a better report of their love and good inclination than I can of Holland."² It was thought very desirable by the English government that this great demonstration should be made once more, whatever might be the ultimate decision of her Majesty upon so momentous a measure. It seemed proper that a solemn embassy should once more proceed to England in order to confer with Elizabeth; but there was much delay in

¹ Fowler to Burghley, October 7, 1589, in Murdin's State Papers, 639.

² Speech of Leicester to the deputies of the States-General just before his departure, November, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

"The town of Utrecht," said Wilkes a few weeks later, "doth dissent from the rest of the provinces in the manner of their sovereignty, who, seeming to be best affected to her Majesty, do mean to yield her the same as Charles V. did hold it, reserving only their principal privileges and religion, which the rest do not intend to do, as I can learn, who do purpose to charge the same with *many strange conditions*. I would be glad to know your Honor's opinion of her Majesty's purpose therein, whereby I may better direct my services here."—Wilkes to Walsingham, January 19, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

regard to the step, and much indignation, in consequence, on the part of the earl. The opposition came, of course, from the Barneveldt party. "They are in no great haste to offer the sovereignty," said Wilkes. "First some towns of Holland made bones thereat, and now they say that Zealand is not resolved."¹

The nature and the causes of the opposition offered by Barneveldt and the states of Holland have been sufficiently explained. Buys, maddened by his long and unjustifiable imprisonment, had just been released by the express desire of Hohenlo; and that unruly chieftain, who guided the German and Dutch magnates, such as Meurs and Overstein, and who even much influenced Maurice and his cousin Count William Louis, was himself governed by Barneveldt. It would have been far from impossible for Leicester, even then, to conciliate the whole party. It was highly desirable that he should do so, for not one of the provinces where he boasted his strength was quite secure for England. Count Meurs, a potent and wealthy noble, was governor of Utrecht and Gelderland, and he had already begun to favor the party in Holland which claimed for that province a legal jurisdiction over the whole ancient episcopate. Under these circumstances common prudence would have suggested that as good an understanding as possible might be kept up with the Dutch and German counts, and that the breach might not be rendered quite irreparable.

Yet, as if there had not been administrative blunders enough committed in one year, the unlucky lean Englishman with the black beard, who was the earl's chief representative, contrived, almost before his master's back was turned, to draw upon himself the wrath of all

¹ Wilkes to Leicester, December 24, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

the fine ladies in Holland. That this should be the direful spring of unutterable disasters, social and political, was easy to foretell.

Just before the governor's departure Otheman came to pay his farewell respects and receive his last commands. He found Leicester seated at chess with Sir Francis Drake.

"I do leave you here, my poor Otheman," said the earl, "but so soon as I leave you I know very well that nobody will give you a good look."¹

"Your Excellency was a true prophet," wrote the secretary a few weeks later, "for, my good lord, I have been in as great danger of my life as ever man was. I have been hunted at Delft from house to house, and then besieged in my lodgings four or five hours, as though I had been the greatest thief, murderer, and traitor in the land."

And why was the unfortunate Otheman thus hunted to his lair? Because he had chosen to indulge in *scandalum magnatum*, and had thereby excited the frenzy of all the great nobles whom it was most important for the English party to conciliate.

There had been gossip about the Princess of Chimay and one Calvaert, who lived in her house, much against the advice of all her best friends. One day she complained bitterly to Master Otheman of the spiteful ways of the world.

"I protest," said she, "that I am the unhappiest lady upon earth to have my name thus called in question."²

So said Otheman, in order to comfort her: "Your Highness is aware that such things are said of all. I am sure I hear every day plenty of speeches about lords and

¹ Otheman to Leicester, January 29, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

² Ibid.

ladies, queens and princesses. You have little cause to trouble yourself for such matters, being known to live honestly and like a good Christian lady. Your Highness is not the only lady spoken of."

The princess listened with attention.

"*Think of the stories about the Queen of England and my Lord of Leicester!*"¹ said Otheman, with infinite tact. "No person is exempted from the tongues of evil-speakers; but virtuous and godly men do put all such foolish matter under their feet. Then there is the *Countess of Meurs*; how much evil talk does one hear about her!"

The princess seemed still more interested, and even excited; and the adroit Otheman, having thus, as he imagined, very successfully smoothed away her anger, went off to have a little more harmless gossip about the princess and the countess with Madame de Meetkerken, who had sent Leicester the rose from her garden.

But no sooner had he gone than away went her Highness to Madame de Meurs, "a marvelous wise and well-spoken gentlewoman, and a grave,"² and informed her and the count, with some trifling exaggeration, that the vile Englishman, secretary to the odious Leicester, had just been there, abusing and calumniating the countess in most lewd and abominable fashion. He had also, she protested, used "very evil speeches of all the ladies in the country."³ For her own part, the princess avowed her determination to have him instantly murdered.⁴ Count Meurs was quite of the same mind, and desired

¹ Otheman to Leicester, last cited. *Totidem verbis*. It is somewhat amusing to find, in a letter to Leicester from his own secretary, these allusions to the "scandal about Queen Elizabeth."

² Leicester to Walsingham, in Bruce, 217.

³ Otheman to Leicester, MS. before cited.

⁴ *Ibid*.

nothing better than to be one of his executioners. Accordingly, the next Sunday, when the babbling secretary had gone down to Delft to hear the French sermon, a select party, consisting of Meurs, William Louis of Nassau, Count Overstein, and others, set forth for that city, laid violent hands on the culprit, and brought him bodily before Princess Chimay. There, being called upon to explain his innuendos, he fell into much trepidation, and gave the names of several English captains whom he supposed to be at that time in England. "For if I had denied the whole matter," said he, "they would have given me the lie, and used me according to their evil mind."¹ Upon this they relented, and released their prisoner; but the next day they made another attack upon him, hunted him from house to house through the whole city of Delft, and at last drove him to earth in his own lodgings, where they kept him besieged several hours. Through the intercession of Wilkes and the authority of the council of state, to which body he succeeded in conveying information of his dangerous predicament, he was, in his own language, "miraculously preserved," although remaining still in daily danger of his life. "I pray God keep me hereafter from the anger of a woman," he exclaimed, "*quia non est ira supra iram mulieris.*"²

He was immediately examined before the council, and succeeded in clearing and justifying himself to the satisfaction of his friends. His part was afterward taken by the councilors, by all the preachers and godly men, and by the University of Leyden. But it was well understood that the blow and the affront had been leveled at the English governor and the English nation.

¹ Otheman to Leicester, MS. before cited.

² *Ibid.*

"All your friends do see," said Otheman, "that this disgrace is not meant so much to me as to your Excellency, the Dutch earls having used such speeches unto me, and, against all law, custom, and reason, used such violence to me, that your Excellency shall wonder to hear of it."¹

Now, the Princess Chimay, besides being of honorable character, was a sincere and exemplary member of the Calvinist Church, and well inclined to the Leicestrians. She was daughter of Count Meghen, one of the earliest victims of Philip II. in the long tragedy of Netherland independence, and widow of Lancelot Berlaymont. Count Meurs was governor of Utrecht, and by no means, up to that time, a thorough supporter of the Holland party;² but thenceforward he went off most abruptly from the party of England, became hand and glove with Hohenlo, accepted the influence of Barneveldt, and did his best to wrest the city of Utrecht from English authority. Such was the effect of the secretary's harmless gossip.

"I thought Count Meurs and his wife better friends to your Excellency than I do see them to be," said

¹ Otheman to Leicester, February 1, 1587, Brit. Museum, Galba, c. xi. p. 216, MS.

² On the contrary, although Hohenlo had been doing his best to gain him, having been drunk with him most conscientiously for a fortnight at a time, his wife, who was his commanding officer, had expressed aversion to the German party, and great affection for that of Leicester. "The countess told me but yesterday," Otheman had written only a few days before, "that her husband was not so foolish as to trust him who had deceived him so often, and that *she will never permit her husband to go from the party of England.*"—Otheman to Leicester, January 16, 1587, Brit. Museum, Galba, c. xi. p. 99, MS.

Otheman afterward. "But he doth now disgrace the English nation many ways in his speeches, saying that they are no soldiers, that they do no good to this country, and that these Englishmen that are at Arnheim have an intent to sell and betray the town to the enemy."¹

But the disgraceful squabble between Hohenlo and Edward Norris had been more unlucky for Leicester than any other incident during the year, for its result was to turn the hatred of both parties against himself. Yet the earl, of all men, was originally least to blame for the transaction. It has been seen that Sir Philip Sydney had borne Norris's cartel to Hohenlo, very soon after the outrage had been committed. The count had promised satisfaction, but meantime was desperately wounded in the attack on Fort Zutphen. Leicester afterward did his best to keep Edward Norris employed in distant places, for he was quite aware that Hohenlo, as lieutenant-general and count of the empire, would consider himself aggrieved at being called to the field by a simple English captain, however deeply he might have injured him. The governor accordingly induced the queen to recall the young man to England, and invited him, much as he disliked his whole race, to accompany him on his departure for that country.

The captain then consulted with his brother Sir John regarding the pending dispute with Hohenlo. His brother advised that the count should be summoned to keep his promise, but that Lord Leicester's permission should previously be requested.

A week before the governor's departure, accordingly, Edward Norris presented himself one morning in the dining-room, and, finding the earl reclining on a win-

¹ Otheman to Leicester, February 1, 1587, MS. before cited.

dow-seat, observed to him that "he desired his Lordship's favor toward the discharging of his reputation."

"The Count Hollock is now well," he proceeded, "and is feasting and banqueting in his lodgings, although he does not come abroad."

"And what way will you take," inquired Leicester, "considering that he keeps his house?"

"'T will be best, I thought," answered Norris, "to write unto him to perform his promise he made me to answer me in the field."

"To whom did he make that promise?" asked the earl.

"To Sir Philip Sydney," answered the captain.

"To my nephew Sydney," said Leicester, musingly. "Very well; do as you think best, and I will do for you what I can."¹

And the governor then added many kind expressions concerning the interest he felt in the young man's reputation. Passing to other matters, Norris then spoke of the great charges he had recently been put to by reason of having exchanged out of the states' service in order to accept a commission from his Lordship to levy a company of horse. This levy had cost him and his friends three hundred pounds, for which he had not been able to "get one groat."

"I beseech your Lordship to stand good for me," said he, "considering the meanest captain in all the country hath as good entertainment as I."

"I can do but little for you before my departure," said Leicester, "but at my return I will advise to do more."

After this amicable conversation Norris thanked his

¹ Edward Norris to the lords, July 28, 1587. Sir John Norris to Walsingham, same date. S. P. Office MSS.

Lordship, took his leave, and straightway wrote his letter to Count Hollock.¹

That personage, in his answer, expressed astonishment that Norris should summon him, in his "weakness and indisposition," but agreed to give him the desired meeting, with sword and dagger, so soon as he should be sufficiently recovered. Norris, in reply, acknowledged his courteous promise, and hoped that he might be speedily restored to health.²

The state council, sitting at The Hague, took up the matter at once, however, and requested immediate information of the earl. He accordingly sent for Norris and his brother Sir John, who waited upon him in his bed-chamber, and were requested to set down in writing the reasons which had moved them in the matter. This statement was accordingly furnished, together with a copy of the correspondence. The earl took the papers, and promised to allow most honorably of it in the council.³

Such is the exact narrative, word for word, as given by Sir John and Edward Norris in a solemn memorial to the lords of her Majesty's Privy Council, as well as to the state council of the United Provinces. A very few days afterward Leicester departed for England, taking Edward Norris with him.

¹ Edward Norris to the lords, July 28, 1587. Sir John Norris to Walsingham, same date. S. P. Office MSS.

² Edward Norris to Leicester (the correspondence with Hohenlo inclosed), November, 1586, S. P. Office MS. Compare Bruce's *Leyce. Corresp.*, Appendix, 474, 475; Remonstrance of Count Hohenlo to the States-General, December 3, 1586, apud Bor, iii. xxiii. 121-129; Reyd, v. 80, 81.

³ E. Norris to the lords, J. Norris to Leicester, MSS. before cited. E. Norris to Leicester, November 21, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

Count Hohenlo was furious at the indignity, notwithstanding the polite language in which he had accepted the challenge. "T was a matter punishable with death," he said, "in all kingdoms and countries, for a simple captain to send such a summons to a man of his station without consent of the supreme authority. It was plain," he added, "that the English governor-general had connived at the affront, for Norris had been living in his family and dining at his table. Nay, more, Lord Leicester had made him a knight at Flushing just before their voyage to England."¹

There seems no good reason to doubt the general veracity of the brothers Norris, although, for the express purpose of screening Leicester, Sir John represented at the time to Hohenlo and others that the earl had not been privy to the transaction.² It is very certain, however, that so soon as the general indignation of Hohenlo and his partizans began to be directed against Leicester, he at once denied, in passionate and abusive language, having had any knowledge whatever of Norris's intentions. He protested that he learned for the first time of the cartel from information furnished to the council of state.

The quarrel between Hohenlo and Norris was after-

¹ Remonstrance of Hohenlo, before cited. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 209.

² "For all this I will assure you that I did always, both to the council, the states, and Count Hollock, confidently deny [*i. e.*, maintain] that my lord knew not of it, because they should not for this matter have any advantage against his Lordship."—Sir John Norris to Sir F. Walsingham, before cited.

The two negatives do not here make an affirmative; but it is evident that Leicester made great use of this damaging denial on the part of Norris.

ward amicably arranged by Lord Buckhurst, during his embassy to the states, at the express desire of the queen. Hohenlo and Sir John Norris became very good friends, while the enmity between them and Leicester grew more deadly every day. The earl was frantic with rage whenever he spoke of the transaction, and denounced Sir John Norris as "a fool, liar, and coward" on all occasions, besides overwhelming his brother, Buckhurst, Wilkes, and every other person who took their part, with a torrent of abuse; and it is well known that the earl was a master of billingsgate.¹

"Hollock says that I did procure Edward Norris to send him his cartel," observed Leicester on one occasion, "wherein I protest before the Lord I was as ignorant as any man in England. His brother John can tell whether I did not send for him to have committed him for it; but that, in very truth, upon the perusing of it" (after it had been sent), "it was very reasonably written, and I did consider, also, the great wrong offered him by the count, and so forbore it. I was so careful for the count's safety after the brawl between him and Norris that I charged Sir John, if any harm came to the count's person by any of his or under him, that he should answer it. Therefore I take the story to be bred in the bosom of some much like a thief or villain, whatsoever he were."²

¹ J. Norris to Walsingham, March 14, 1587. Same to same, June 3, 1587. S. P. Office MSS.

"The best is, such tales can no more irritate my lord's anger against me," said Sir John; "for since he affirmeth that I am a fool, a coward, and a hinderer of all these services, I know not what more he can be provoked to."

² Leicester to Buckhurst, April 30, 1587. Same to Walsingham, August 4, 1587. S. P. Office MSS.

And all this was doubtless true so far as regarded the earl's original exertions to prevent the consequences of the quarrel, but did not touch the point of the *second correspondence* preceded by the conversation in the dining-room, eight days before the voyage to England. The affair, in itself of slight importance, would not merit so much comment at this late day had it not been for its endless consequences. The ferocity with which the earl came to regard every prominent German, Hollander, and Englishman engaged in the service of the states sprang very much from the complications of this vulgar brawl. Norris, Hohenlo, Wilkes, Buckhurst, were all denounced to the queen as calumniators, traitors, and villains, and it may easily be understood how grave and extensive must have been the effects of such vituperation upon the mind of Elizabeth,¹ who, until the last day of his life, doubtless entertained for the earl the deepest affection of which her nature was susceptible. Hohenlo, with Count Maurice, were the acknowledged chiefs of the anti-English party, and the possibility of cordial coöperation between the countries may be judged of by the entanglement which had thus occurred.

Leicester had always hated Sir John Norris, but he knew that the mother had still much favor with the queen, and he was therefore the more vehement in his denunciations of the son the more difficulty he found in entirely destroying his character, and the keener jeal-

¹ *E. g.*, "The lies which Lord Buckhurst, Sir J. Norris, and Wilkes did with their malicious wits and slanderous tongues devise and utter," wrote Leicester to the Privy Council, "concern my honor and my life. I demand that I, being found clear, and they to have slandered me, may have that remedy against them which is in justice due."—Leicester to the Privy Council, August 19, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

ously he felt that any other tongue but his should influence her Majesty. "The story of John Norris about the cartel is, by the Lord God, most false," he exclaimed. "I do beseech you not to see me so dealt withal, but that especially her Majesty may understand these untruths, who perhaps, by *the mother's fair speeches and the son's smooth words*, may take some other conceit of my doings than I deserve."¹

He was most resolute to stamp the character of falsehood upon both the brothers, for he was more malignant toward Sir John than toward any man in the world, not even excepting Wilkes. To the queen, to the lords of the Privy Council, to Walsingham, to Burghley, he poured forth endless quantities of venom, enough to destroy the characters of a hundred honest men.

"The declaration of the two Norrises for the cartel is most false, as I am a Christian," he said to Walsingham. "I have a dozen witnesses, as good and some better than they, who will testify that they were present when I misliked the writing of the letter before ever I saw it. And by the allegiance I owe to her Majesty, I never knew of the letter, nor gave consent to it, nor heard of it till it was complained of from Count Hollock. But, as they are false in this, so you will find J. N. as false in his other answers; so that he would be ashamed, but that his old conceit hath made him past shame, I fear. His companions in Ireland, as in these countries, report

¹ Leicester to Burghley, September 11, 1587, S. P. Office MS. The meddling Otheman seems to have made himself privately very busy in this affair. He sent Leicester copies of the letters written by the brothers Norris, and declared that he was "enticed by them, in the earl's absence, to become a forger and liar in this matter, but utterly refused."—MS. last cited.

that *Sir John Norris* would often say that *he was but an ass and a fool, who, if a lie would serve his turn, would spare it. I remember I have heard that the Earl of Sussex would say so, and indeed this gentleman doth imitate him in divers things.*"¹

But a very grave disaster to Holland and England was soon the fruit of the hatred borne by Leicester to Sir John Norris. Immediately after the battle of Zutphen

¹ Leicester to Walsingham, August 12, 1587, S. P. Office MS. To the lord treasurer the earl took pains to narrate the whole story, with much emphasis and in minute detail; and it is important to lay it before the reader, as an offset to the simple and apparently truthful narrative of Edward Norris, because such intimate revelations indicate to us the really trifling springs of numerous great events. As before observed, the affair in itself is one which history should justly disdain, but it swells into considerable importance, both on account of its extensive results, and from the light which it throws on the character of Leicester, the most important personage, during his lifetime, in the whole kingdom of England.

"Would God," said Leicester to Burghley, "that it had pleased her Majesty to have suffered my Lord Buckhurst and Sir John Norris to have gone on with their plot, for they laid a most malicious plot against me. As for the answer that Sir John Norris and his brother have made touching their acquainting me with the cartel to Count Hollock, thus made now to your Lordship, if ever I knew or heard any news of this cartel till complaint came to me from the count, I renounce my allegiance and fidelity to my Sovereign Lady. Therefore, mark the arrogant boldness of those young fellows that will face a lie of that sort. But I have here Sir William Pelham and Sir William Russel, besides others that were present when I called Sir John to me and threatened to lay his brother by the heels, and himself too, if he were privy to it. He then besought me to hear his brother and to see the letters, assuring me there was no such cartel as was reported. I commanded him to give me the copy of his letters, and bring it to me. Meanwhile I was gone to the council, and whilst we were at council, an

and the investment of that town by the English and Netherlanders, great pains were taken to secure the city of Deventer. This was, after Amsterdam and Antwerp, the most important mercantile place in all the provinces. It was a large, prosperous commercial and manufacturing capital, a member of the Hanseatic League, and the great center of the internal trade of the Netherlands with the Baltic nations. There was a strong Catholic party in the town, and the magistracy were disposed to

hour or two after, Edward Norris sent me his letters, which I took to Wilkes before I did so much as look into them. Being openly read there, we did indeed perceive so direct a cartel as could be made, and divers of the council made the best of it, and so did I, declaring what the gent. was. Yet did I then declare to them all what order I had taken for Norris, that he should go with me to England, and that her Majesty had also sent for him, protesting to your Lordships, by all faith, honor, and truth, that neither the one nor the other did dare to use those speeches that they have set down; saving that one of the servants of Sir John Norris came to me, hearing that his brother should go over, to know how his credit should be saved with the Count Hollock touching the disgrace he was in, with such like words. I answered, 'The Count Hollock is now sick and sore, and it were no honesty for Sir John's brother to offer him any quarrel. Besides, I will not suffer it, so long as I am here, and Edward Norris is commanded to go into England. *No doubt the count will remember his promise*, which, as Sir John Norris had told me, was that when the camp was broken up *he will answer his brother in the field, like a gentleman.*' Never was there more, never did any of them tell me of any cartel to be sent, never did any speak with me at Deventer.

"Besides, after I was gone, lying on shipboard at Brill, Edward Norris being then in ship with me, there came a messenger from the Count Hollock, with a letter to me, about midnight. This messenger was only to let me know of the count's having received such letters and brags from Norris, and that now he began to amend, Norris, as he heard, was gone away with me into England. He marveled much he would do so, and sent his messenger to see

side with Parma. It was notorious that provisions and munitions were supplied from thence to the beleaguered Zutphen; and Leicester despatched Sir William Pelham, accordingly, to bring the inhabitants to reason. The stout marshal made short work of it. Taking Sir William Stanley and the greater part of his regiment with him, he caused them, day by day, to steal into the town, in small parties of ten and fifteen. No objection was made to this proceeding on the part of the city government. Then Stanley himself arrived in the morning, and the marshal in the evening, of the 20th of October. Pelham ordered the magistrates to present themselves

if it were so. I answered him, it was so, for the gentleman, Sir Edward Norris, lay there asleep, and he was to go into England by her Majesty's express commandment. For my part, I said, I was willing also to carry him with me, for that I would be loath to leave any occasion behind me of trouble or discord, knowing already some mislike to be between his brother John and the count. This was my answer. Now, judge how likely these tales be that I would consent that Norris should send a cartel, and yet take him away when he should perform the matter. Either he must show to be a coward, or else, if he were in earnest, he must seem to be angry with me for taking him away. If ever there were other speeches, either by the one Norris or the other, or if ever I knew of this cartel, directly or indirectly, more than your Lordship that was in England, till the complaint came to me of it, I am the falsest wretch that lives. If I had liked of their quarrels or cartels, there was means enough for me to leave them to their own revenge. I have troubled your Lordship too long with this trifle, but you should know the shameless audacity of these young fellows, whose cunning, sly heads you had need look into."—Leicester to Burghley, August 12, 1587, Brit. Museum, Galba, d. i. p. 240, MS.

Thus the November letter was not seen by Leicester before it was sent, although he was aware that it was to be sent, and in that circumstance seemed to reside the whole strength of his case. So soon as it appeared that the state council was angry and that

forthwith at his lodgings, and told them, with grim courtesy, that the Earl of Leicester excused himself from making them a visit, not being able, for grief at the death of Sir Philip Sydney, to come so soon near the scene of his disaster. His Excellency had therefore sent him to require the town to receive an English garrison. "So make up your minds, and delay not," said Pelham; "for I have many important affairs on my hands, and must send word to his Excellency at once. To-morrow morning at eight o'clock I shall expect your answer."¹

Next day the magistrates were all assembled in the town house before six. Stanley had filled the great square with his troops, but he found that the burghers, five thousand of whom constituted the municipal militia, had chained the streets and locked the gates. At seven o'clock Pelham proceeded to the town house, and, followed by his train, made his appearance before the magisterial board. Then there was a knocking at the door, and Sir William Stanley entered, having left a strong guard of soldiers at the entrance to the hall.

"I am come for an answer," said the lord marshal; "tell me straight."

The magistrates hesitated, whispered, and presently one of them slipped away.

the count considered himself outraged, the earl seems to have taken advantage of a subterfuge, and to have made up by violence what he lacked in argument.

It is difficult to imagine a more paltry affair to occupy the attention of grave statesmen and generals for months, and to fill the archives of kingdom and commonwealth with mountains of correspondence.

¹ Letter of Henry Archer, from Utrecht, October 23, 1586, in the Appendix to Mr. Bruce's admirably edited volume of *Leycester Correspondence*, 478-480.

“There ’s one of you gone,” cried the marshal. “Fetch him straight back, or, by the living God, before whom I stand, there is not one of you shall leave this place with life.”

So the burgomasters sent for the culprit, who returned.

“Now tell me,” said Pelham, “why you have this night chained your streets and kept such strong watch while your friends and defenders were in the town? Do you think we came over here to spend our lives and our goods, and to leave all we have, to be thus used and thus betrayed by you? Nay, you shall find us trusty to our friends, but as politic as yourselves. Now, then, set your hands to this document,” he proceeded, as he gave them a new list of magistrates, all selected from staunch Protestants.

“Give over your government to the men here nominated. Straight; dally not!”

The burgomasters signed the paper.

“Now,” said Pelham, “let one of you go to the watch, discharge the guard, bid them unarm and go home to their lodgings.”

A magistrate departed on the errand.

“Now fetch me the keys of the gate,” said Pelham, “and that straightway, or, before God, you shall die.”

The keys were brought, and handed to the peremptory old marshal. The old board of magistrates were then elapped into prison, the new ones installed, and Deventer was gained for the English and Protestant party.¹

There could be no doubt that a city so important and thus fortunately secured was worthy to be well guarded; there could be no doubt, either, that it would be well to

¹ Letter of Henry Archer, etc., just cited.

conciliate the rich and influential papists in the place, who, although attached to the ancient religion, were not necessarily disloyal to the Republic; but there could be as little that, under the circumstances of this sudden municipal revolution, it would be important to place a garrison of Protestant soldiers there, under the command of a Protestant officer of known fidelity.

To the astonishment of the whole commonwealth, the earl appointed Sir William Stanley to be governor of the town, and stationed in it a garrison of twelve hundred wild Irishmen.¹

Sir William was a cadet of one of the noblest English houses. He was the bravest of the brave. His gallantry at the famous Zutphen fight had attracted admiration, where nearly all had performed wondrous exploits; but he was known to be an ardent papist and a soldier of fortune, who had fought on various sides, and had even borne arms in the Netherlands under the ferocious Alva.² Was it strange that there should be murmurs at the appointment of so dangerous a chief to guard a wavering city which had so recently been secured?

The Irish kernes—and they are described by all contemporaries, English and Flemish, in the same language—were accounted as the wildest and fiercest of barbarians. There was something grotesque, yet appalling, in the pictures painted of these rude, almost naked, brigands, who ate raw flesh, spoke no intelligible language, and ranged about the country, burning, slaying, plundering, a terror to the peasantry and a source of constant embarrassment to the more orderly troops in the

¹ Reyd, v. 85. J. Norris to Burghley, January 21, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

² Ibid.

service of the Republic. "It seemed," said one who had seen them, "that they belonged not to Christendom, but to Brazil."¹ Moreover, they were all papists, and, however much one might be disposed to censure that great curse of the age, religious intolerance, — which was almost as flagrant in the counsels of Queen Elizabeth as in those of Philip, — it was certainly a most fatal policy to place such a garrison, at that critical juncture, in the newly acquired city. Yet Leicester, who had banished papists from Utrecht without cause and without trial, now placed most notorious Catholics in Deventer.²

Zutphen, which was still besieged by the English and the patriots, was much crippled by the loss of the great fort, the capture of which, mainly through the brilliant valor of Stanley's brother Edward, has already been related. The possession of Deventer and of this fort gave the control of the whole northeastern territory to the patriots; but, as if it were not enough to place Deventer in the hands of Sir William Stanley, Leicester thought proper to confide the government of the fort to Rowland Yorke. Not a worse choice could be made in the whole army.

Yorke was an adventurer of the most audacious and dissolute character. He was a Londoner by birth, one of those "ruffling blades" inveighed against by the governor-general on his first taking command of the forces. A man of desperate courage, a gambler, a professional duelist, a bravo, famous in his time among the "common hacksters and swaggerers" as the first to introduce the custom of foining, or thrusting with the rapier in

¹ Reyd, v. 85.

² Ibid. Le Petit, ii. xiv. 341. Bor, ii. xxii. 878, 879. Wagenaer, viii. 196. Meteren, xiv. 250.

single combats,—whereas before his day it had been customary among the English to fight with sword and shield, and held unmanly to strike below the girdle,¹—he had perpetually changed sides, in the Netherland wars, with the shameless disregard to principle which characterized all his actions. He had been lieutenant to the infamous John van Imbize, and had been concerned with him in the notorious attempt to surrender Dendermonde and Ghent to the enemy, which had cost that traitor his head. Yorke had been thrown into prison at Brussels, but there had been some delay about his execution, and the conquest of the city by Parma saved him from the gibbet. He had then taken service under the Spanish commander-in-chief, and had distinguished himself, as usual, by deeds of extraordinary valor, having sprung on board the burning volcano-ship at the siege of Antwerp. Subsequently returning to England, he had, on Leicester's appointment, obtained the command of a company in the English contingent, and had been conspicuous on the field of Warnsfeld; for the courage which he always displayed under any standard was only equaled by the audacity with which he was ever ready to desert from it. Did it seem credible that the fort of Zutphen should be placed in the hands of Rowland Yorke?

Remonstrances were made by the States-General at once. With regard to Stanley, Leicester maintained that he was, in his opinion, the fittest man to take charge of the whole English army during his absence in England.² In answer to a petition made by the states against the appointment of Yorke, “in respect to his per-

¹ Camden, iii. 397. Baker's Chronicle, 375.

² Wilkes to Leicester, January 24, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

fidious dealings before," the earl replied that he would answer for his fidelity as for his own brother, adding peremptorily: "Do you trust me? Then trust Yorke."¹

But, besides his other qualifications for high command, Stanley possessed an inestimable one in Leicester's eyes. He was, or at least had been, an enemy of Sir John Norris. To be this made a papist pardonable. It was even better than to be a Puritan.

But the earl did more than to appoint the traitor Yorke and the papist Stanley to these important posts. On the very day of his departure, and immediately after his final quarrel with Sir John about the Hohenlo cartel, which had renewed all the ancient venom, he signed a secret paper by which he especially forbade the council of state to interfere with or set aside any appointments to the government of towns or forts, or to revoke any military or naval commissions, without his consent.²

Now, supreme executive authority had been delegated to the state council by the governor-general during his absence. Command in chief over all the English forces, whether in the queen's pay or the states' pay, had been conferred upon Norris, while command over the Dutch and German troops belonged to Hohenlo; but, by virtue of the earl's secret paper, Stanley and Yorke were now made independent of all authority. The evil consequences natural to such a step were not slow in displaying themselves.

Stanley at once manifested great insolence toward Norris. That distinguished general was placed in a most

¹ Wilkes to Leicester, MS. last cited. Sir John Conway to Walsingham, January 28, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

² Meteren, xiii. 238. Bor, ii. xxii. 786, 787. Wagenaer, viii. 188, 189.

painful position. A post of immense responsibility was confided to him. The honor of England's queen and of England's soldiers was intrusted to his keeping, at a moment full of danger, and in a country where every hour might bring forth some terrible change; yet he knew himself the mark at which the most powerful man in England was directing all his malice, and that the queen, who was wax in her great favorite's hands, was even then receiving the most fatal impressions as to his character and conduct. "Well I know," said he to Burghley, "that the root of the former malice borne me is not withered, but that I must look for like fruits therefrom as before";¹ and he implored the lord treasurer that when his honor and reputation should be called in question he might be allowed to return to England and clear himself. "For myself," said he, "I have not yet received any commission, although I have attended his Lordship of Leicester to his ship. It is promised to be sent me, and in the meantime I understand that my lord hath granted separate commissions to Sir William Stanley and Rowland Yorke, exempting them from obeying of me. If this be true, 't is only done to nourish factions and to interrupt any better course in our doings than before hath been." He earnestly requested to be furnished with a commission directly from her Majesty. "The enemy is reinforcing," he added. "We are very weak, our troops are unpaid these three months, and we are grown odious to our friends."²

Honest Councilor Wilkes, who did his best to conciliate all parties and to do his duty to England and Holland, to Leicester and to Norris, had the strongest sympathy

¹ J. Norris to Burghley, November 17, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² *Ibid.*

with Sir John. "Truly, besides the value, wisdom, and many other good parts that are in him," he said, "I have noted wonderful patience and modesty in the man, in bearing many apparent injuries done unto him, which I have known to be countenanced and nourished, contrary to all reason, to disgrace him. Please therefore continue your honorable opinion of him in his absence, whatsoever may be maliciously reported to his disadvantage, for I dare avouch, of my own poor skill, that her Majesty hath not a second subject of his place and quality so able to serve in those countries as he. . . . I doubt not but God will move her Majesty, in despite of the devil, to respect him as he deserves."¹

Sir John disclaimed any personal jealousy in regard to Stanley's appointment, but within a week or two of the earl's departure he already felt strong anxiety as to its probable results. "If it prove no hindrance to the service," he said, "it shall nothing trouble me. I desire that my doings may show what I am; neither will I seek by indirect means to calumniate him or any other, but will let them show themselves."²

Early in December he informed the lord treasurer that Stanley's own men were boasting that their master acknowledged no superior authority to his own, and that he had said as much himself to the magistracy of Deventer. The burghers had already complained, through the constituted guardians of their liberties, of his insolence and rapacity and of the turbulence of his troops, and had appealed to Sir John; but the colonel-general's remonstrances had been received by Sir William with

¹ Wilkes to Burghley, November 17, 1586. Same to Walsingham, May 17, 1587. S. P. Office MSS.

² J. Norris to Walsingham, December 9, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

contumely and abuse, and by the vaunt that he had even a greater commission than any he had yet shown.¹

“Three sheep, an ox, and a whole hog” were required weekly of the peasants for his table, in a time of great scarcity, and it was impossible to satisfy the rapacious appetites of the Irish kernes.² The paymaster-general of the English forces was daily appealed to by Stanley for funds,—an application which was certainly not unreasonable, as her Majesty’s troops had not received any payment for three months,—but there “was not a denier in the treasury,” and he was therefore implored to wait. At last the States-General sent him a month’s pay for himself and all his troops, although, as he was in the queen’s service, no claim could justly be made upon them.³

¹ J. Norris to Burghley, December 12, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Wilkes to Walsingham, January 19, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

³ “He is not contented with the entertainment of forty pounds sterling a month allowed him by the states as governor of the place, but hath taken perforce, from the commissioners lately sent thither to *deliver a month’s pay*, an allowance of ten pounds sterling a month over and besides for every company of his regiment, being, as he saith, ten companies, amounting by the muster to fourteen hundred florins (one hundred and forty pounds), besides a pay for his own company, which is more than is allowed to Sir J. Norris by three hundred florins a month, and as much as is given for entertainment to Count Hohenlo, or to any earl that serveth in these countries. He is charged further to take within the country hereabouts, from the poor villagers, weekly, for the provisions of his table, one whole ox, three sheep, and one hog, or, in lieu of the hog, twenty shillings sterling; and if it be not brought every week, they sent the soldiers to take it perforce,” etc.—*Ibid.*

This certainly was stronger diet than the “bare cheese” of which Sir William complained. Compare Reid, vi. 96, 97; Bor, ii. xxii. 878, 879.

Wilkes, also, as English member of the state council, faithfully conveyed to the governor-general in England the complaints which came up to all the authorities of the Republic against Sir William Stanley's conduct in Deventer. He had seized the keys of the gates, he kept possession of the towers and fortifications, he had meddled with the civil government, he had infringed all their privileges. Yet this was the board of magistrates expressly set up by Leicester, with the armed hand, by the agency of Marshal Pelham and this very Colonel Stanley—a board of Calvinist magistrates placed but a few weeks before in power to control a city of Catholic tendencies. And here was a papist commander displaying Leicester's commission in their faces, and making it a warrant for dealing with the town as if it were under martial law, and as if he were an officer of the Duke of Parma. It might easily be judged whether such conduct were likely to win the hearts of Netherlanders to Leicester and to England.¹

“Albeit, for my own part,” said Wilkes, “I do hold Sir William Stanley to be a wise and a discreet gent., yet when I consider that the magistracy is such as was established by your Lordship, and of the religion, and well affected to her Majesty, and that I see how heavily the matter is conceived of here by the states and council, I do fear that all is not well. The very bruit of this doth begin to draw hatred upon our nation. Were it not that I doubt some dangerous issue of this matter, and that I might be justly charged with negligence if I should not advertise you beforehand, I would have forborne to mention this dissension, for the states are about to write to your Lordship and to her Majesty for

¹ Wilkes to Leicester, December 9, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

reformation in this matter.”¹ He added that he had already written earnestly to Sir William, “hoping to persuade him to carry a mild hand over the people.”

Thus wrote Councilor Wilkes, as in duty bound, to Lord Leicester, so early as the 9th December, and the warning voice of Norris had made itself heard in England quite as soon. Certainly the governor-general, having, upon his own responsibility, and prompted, it would seem, by passion more than reason, made this dangerous appointment, was fortunate in receiving timely and frequent notice of its probable results.

And the conscientious Wilkes wrote most earnestly, as he said he had done, to the turbulent Stanley.

“Good Sir William,” said he, “the magistrates and burgesses of Deventer complain to this council that you have by violence wrested from them the keys of one of their gates, that you assemble your garrison in arms to terrify them, that you have seized one of their forts, that the Irish soldiers do commit many extortions and exactions upon the inhabitants, that you have imprisoned their burgesses and do many things against their laws and privileges, so that it is feared the best affected of the inhabitants toward her Majesty will forsake the town. Whether any of these things be true, yourself doth best know, but I do assure you that the apprehension thereof here doth make us and our government hateful. For mine own part, I have always known you for a gentleman of value, wisdom, and judgment, and therefore should hardly believe any such thing. . . . I earnestly require you to take heed of consequences, and to be careful of the honor of her Majesty and the reputation of our nation. You will consider that the gaining

¹ Wilkes to Leicester, December 9, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

possession of the town grew by them that are now in office, who, being of the religion, and well affected to his Excellency's government, wrought his entry into the same. . . . I know that Lord Leicester is sworn to maintain all the inhabitants of the provinces in their ancient privileges and customs. I know further that your commission carrieth no authority to warrant you to intermeddle any further than with the government of the soldiers and guard of the town. Well, you may, *in your own conceipt*, confer some words to authorize you in some larger sort, but, believe me, sir, they will not warrant you sufficiently to deal any further than I have said, for I have perused a copy of your commission for that purpose. *I know the name itself of a governor of a town is odious to this people*, and hath been ever since *the remembrance of the Spanish government*, and if we, by any lack of foresight, should give the like occasion, *we should make ourselves as odious as they are*, which God forbid.

"You are to consider that we are not come into these countries *for their defense only*, but for the defense of her Majesty and our own native country, knowing that *the preservation of both dependeth altogether upon the preserving of these*. Wherefore I do eftsoons entreat and require you to forbear to intermeddle any further. If there shall follow any dangerous effect of your proceedings after this my friendly advice, I shall be heartily sorry for your sake, but I shall be able to testify to her Majesty that I have done my duty in admonishing you."¹

Thus spake the stiff councilor, earnestly and well, in behalf of England's honor and the good name of England's queen.

But the brave soldier, whose feet were fast sliding into

¹ Wilkes to Stanley, December 9, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

the paths of destruction, replied in a tone of indignant innocence, more likely to aggravate than to allay suspicion. "Finding," said Stanley, "that you already threaten, I have gone so far as to scan the terms of my commission, which I doubt not to execute *according to his Excellency's meaning and mine honor*. First, I assure you that I have maintained justice, and that severely; else hardly would the soldiers have been contented with bread and bare cheese."¹

He acknowledged possessing himself of the keys of the town, but defended it on the ground of necessity and of the character of the people, "who thrust out the Spaniards and Almaynes, and afterward never would obey the prince and states." "I would be," he said, "the *sorriest man that lives* if by my negligence the place should be lost. Therefore I thought good to seize the great tower and ports. If I meant evil, I *needed no keys, for here is force enough*."²

With much effrontery, he then affected to rely for evidence of his courteous and equitable conduct toward the citizens upon the very magistrates who had been petitioning the States-General, the state council, and the English queen against his violence.

"For my courtesy and humanity," he said, "I refer me unto the magistrates themselves. But I think they sent some *rhetoricians*, who could allege of little grief and speak pitiful, and truly I find your ears have been as pitiful in so timorously condemning me. *I assure you that her Majesty hath not a better servant than I, nor a more faithful*, in these parts. This I will prove with my flesh and blood. Although I know there be divers flying

¹ Stanley to Wilkes, December 14, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² *Ibid.*

reports spread by my enemies, which are come to my ears, I doubt not my virtue and truth will prove them calumniators¹ and men of little. So, good Mr. Wilkes, I pray you, consider gravely, give ear discreetly, and advertise into England soundly. For me, I have been and am your friend, and glad to hear any admonition from one so wise as yourself."

He then alluded ironically to the "good favor and money" with which he had been so contented of late, that if Mr. Wilkes would discharge him of his promise to Lord Leicester, he would take his leave with all his heart. Captain, officers, and soldiers had been living on half a pound of cheese a day. For himself, he had received but one hundred and twenty pounds in five months, and was living at three pounds by the day. "This my wealth will not long hold out," he observed, "but yet I will never fail of my promise to his Excellency, whatsoever I endure. It is for her Majesty's service and for the love I bear to him."

He bitterly complained of the unwillingness of the country people to furnish viviers, wagons, and other necessaries for the fort before Zutphen. "Had it not been," he said, "for the travail extraordinary of myself, and *patience of my brother Yorke*, that fort would have been in danger. But, according to *his desire and forethought*, I furnished that place with cavalry and infantry, for I know the troops there be marvelous weak."²

In reply, Wilkes stated that the complaints had been

¹ "*Callaminaters*," so Sir William called the men who were speaking the truth about him (MS. ubi sup.). He was more used to handle the sword than the pen, yet the untaught vigor of his style causes an additional regret that a man so brave and so capable should have thrown himself away.

² Stanley to Wilkes, ubi sup.

made "by no *rhetorician*, but by letter from the magistrates themselves" (on whom he relied so confidently) "to the state council." The councilor added, rather tartly, that since his honest words of defense and of warning had been "taken in so scoffing a manner," Sir William might be sure of not being troubled with any more of his letters.¹

But, a day or two before thus addressing him, he had already inclosed to Leicester very important letters addressed by the council of Gelderland to Count Meurs, stadholder of the province, and by him forwarded to the state council. For there were now very grave rumors concerning the fidelity of "that patient and foreseeing brother Yorke," whom Stanley had been so generously strengthening in Fort Zutphen. The lieutenant of Yorke, a certain Mr. Zouch, had been seen within the city of Zutphen, in close conference with Colonel Tassis, Spanish governor of the place.² Moreover, there had been a very frequent exchange of courtesies—by which the horrors of war seemed to be much mitigated—between Yorke on the outside and Tassis within. The English commander sent baskets of venison, wild fowl, and other game, which were rare in the market of a besieged town. The Spanish governor responded with baskets of excellent wine and barrels of beer.³ A very pleasant state of feeling, perhaps, to contemplate,—as an advance in civilization over the not very distant days of the Haarlem and Leyden sieges, when barrels of prisoners' heads,

¹ Wilkes to Stanley, December 18, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Le Conseil de Guelders au Comte de Meurs et Nieuwenaer, December 14, 1586. Wilkes to Leicester, December 16, 1586. S. P. Office MSS.

³ Hoofd, Vervolgh, 220. Reyd, vi. 95.

cut off, a dozen or two at a time, were the social amenities usually exchanged between Spaniards and Dutchmen,—but somewhat suspicious to those who had grown gray in this horrible warfare.

The Irish kernes, too, were allowed to come to mass within the city, and were received there with as much fraternity by the Catholic soldiers of Tassis as the want of any common dialect would allow—a proceeding which seemed better, perhaps, for the salvation of their souls than for the advancement of the siege.¹

The state council had written concerning these rumors to Rowland Yorke, but the patient man had replied in a manner which Wilkes characterized as “unfit to have been given to such as were the executors of the Earl of Leicester’s authority.” The councilor implored the governor-general accordingly to send some speedy direction in this matter, as well to Rowland Yorke as to Sir William Stanley; for he explicitly and earnestly warned him that those personages would pay no heed to the remonstrances of the state council.²

Thus again and again was Leicester—on whose head rested, by his own deliberate act, the whole responsibility—forewarned that some great mischief was impending. There was time enough even then—for it was but the 16th December—to place full powers in the hands of the state council, of Norris, or of Hohenlo, and secretly and swiftly to secure the suspected persons and avert the danger. Leicester did nothing. How could he acknowledge his error? How could he mani-

¹ Wilkes to Stanley, December 17, 1586, MS., strongly remonstrating against the practice. Hoofd, *Reyd*, ubi sup. Wage-naer, viii. 196.

² Wilkes to Leicester, December 16, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

fest confidence in the detested Norris? How appeal to the violent and deeply incensed Hohenlo?

Three weeks more rolled by, and the much-enduring Rowland Yorke was still in confidential correspondence with Leicester and Walsingham, although his social intercourse with the Spanish governor of Zutphen continued to be upon the most liberal and agreeable footing. He was not quite satisfied with the general aspect of the queen's cause in the Netherlands, and wrote to the secretary of state in a tone of despondency and mild exposition. Walsingham would have been less edified by these communications had he been aware that Yorke, upon *first entering Leicester's service*, had immediately opened a correspondence with the Duke of Parma, and had secretly given him to understand that his *object was to serve the cause of Spain*. This was indeed the fact, as the duke informed the king, "but then he is such a scatter-brained, reckless daredevil," said Parma, "that I hardly expected much of him."¹ Thus the astute Sir Francis had been outwitted by the adventurous Rowland, who was perhaps destined also to surpass the anticipations of the Spanish commander-in-chief.

Meantime Yorke informed his English patrons, on the 7th January, that matters were not proceeding so smoothly in the political world as he could wish. He had found "many cross and indirect proceedings," and so, according to Lord Leicester's desire, he sent him a "discourse" on the subject, which he begged Sir Francis to "peruse, add to, or take away from," and then to inclose to the earl. He hoped he should be forgiven if the style of the production was not quite satisfactory; for, said

¹ Parma to Philip II., February 12, 1587: "Tan liviano y arriscado," etc. (Arch. de Sim. MS.).

he, "the place where I am doth too much torment my memory to call every point to my remembrance."¹

It must, in truth, have been somewhat a hard task upon his memory to keep freshly in mind every detail of the parallel correspondence which he was carrying on with the Spanish and with the English government. Even a cool head like Rowland's might be forgiven for being occasionally puzzled. "So if there be anything hard to be understood," he observed to Walsingham, "advertise me, and I will make it plainer." Nothing could be more ingenuous. He confessed, however, to being out of pocket. "Please your Honor," said he, "I have taken great pains to make a bad place something, and it has cost me all the money I had, and here I can receive nothing but discontentment. I dare *not write you all*, lest you should think it impossible," he added; and it is quite probable that even Walsingham would have been astonished had Rowland written all. The game playing by Yorke and Stanley was not one to which English gentlemen were much addicted.

"I trust the bearer, Edward Stanley, a discreet, brave gentleman," he said, "with details." And the remark proves that the gallant youth who had captured this very Fort Zutphen in so brilliant a manner was not privy to the designs of his brother and of Yorke, for the object of the "discourse" was to deceive the English government.

"I humbly beseech that you will send for me home," concluded Rowland, "for true as I humbled my mind to please her Majesty, your Honor, and the dead,² now am

¹ Rowland Yorke to Walsingham, January 7, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

² By the dead he meant Sir Philip Sydney, who had been deceived into a friendly feeling for the adventurer (Meteren, xiv. 250).

I content to humble myself lower to please myself, for now, since his Excellency's departure, there is no form of proceeding neither honorably nor honestly." ¹

Three other weeks passed over, weeks of anxiety and dread throughout the Republic. Suspicion grew darker than ever, not only as to Yorke and Stanley, but as to all the English commanders, as to the whole English nation. An Anjou plot, a general massacre, was expected by many, yet there were no definite grounds for such dark anticipations. In vain had painstaking, truth-telling Wilkes summoned Stanley to his duty, and called on Leicester, time after time, to interfere. In vain did Sir John Norris, Sir John Conway, the members of the state council, and all others who should have had authority, do their utmost to avert a catastrophe. Their hands were all tied by the fatal letter of the 24th November. Most anxiously did all implore the Earl of Leicester to return. Never was a more dangerous moment than this for a country to be left to its fate. Scarcely ever in history was there a more striking exemplification of the need of a man, of an individual, who should embody the powers and wishes, and concentrate in one brain and arm the whole energy, of a commonwealth. But there was no such man, for the Republic had lost its chief when Orange died. There was much wisdom and patriotism now. Olden-Barneveldt was competent, and so was Buys, to direct the counsels of the Republic, and there were few better soldiers than Norris and Hohenlo to lead her armies against Spain. But the supreme authority had been confided to Leicester. He had not perhaps proved himself extraordinarily qualified for his post, but he *was* the governor-in-chief, and his departure

¹ Yorke to Walsingham, MS. last cited.

without resigning his powers left the commonwealth headless at a moment when singleness of action was vitally important.

At last, very late in January, one Hugh Overing, a haberdasher from Ludgate Hill, was caught at Rotterdam, on his way to Ireland, with a bundle of letters from Sir William Stanley, and was sent, as a suspicious character, to the state council at The Hague.¹ On the same day another Englishman, a small youth, "well favored," rejoicing in a "very little red beard and in very ragged clothes," unknown by name, but ascertained to be in the service of Rowland Yorke and to have been the bearer of letters to Brussels, also passed through Rotterdam. By connivance of the innkeeper, one Joyce, also an Englishman, he succeeded in making his escape.² The information contained in the letters thus intercepted was important, but it came too late, even if then the state council could have acted without giving mortal offense to Elizabeth and to Leicester.

On the evening of the 28th January (N. S.) Sir William Stanley entertained the magistrates of Deventer at a splendid banquet. There was free conversation at table concerning the idle suspicions which had been rife in the provinces as to his good intentions and the censures which had been cast upon him for the repressive measures which he had thought necessary to adopt for the security of the city. He took that occasion to assure his guests that the Queen of England had not a more loyal subject than himself, nor the Netherlands a more devoted friend. The company expressed themselves fully restored to confidence in his character and purposes, and

¹ Conway to Walsingham, January 28, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

² Ibid.

the burgomasters, having exchanged pledges of faith and friendship with the commandant in flowing goblets, went home comfortably to bed, highly pleased with their noble entertainer and with themselves.¹

Very late that same night Stanley placed three hundred of his wild Irish in the Noorenberg Tower, a large white structure which commanded the Zutphen Gate, and sent bodies of chosen troops to surprise all the burgher guards at their respective stations. Strong pickets of cavalry were also placed in all the principal thoroughfares of the city. At three o'clock in the following morning he told his officers that he was about to leave Deventer for a few hours, in order to bring in some reinforcements for which he had sent, as he had felt much anxiety for some time past as to the disposition of the burghers. His officers, honest Englishmen, suspecting no evil and having confidence in their chief, saw nothing strange in this proceeding, and Sir William rode deliberately out of Deventer. After he had been absent an hour or two, the clatter of hoofs and the tramp of infantry were heard without, and presently the commandant returned, followed by a thousand musketeers and three or four hundred troopers. It was still pitch-dark; but, dimly lighted by torches, small detachments of the fresh troops picked their way through the black, narrow streets, while the main body poured at once upon the Brink, or great square. Here, quietly and swiftly, they were marshaled into order, the cavalry, pikemen, and musketeers lining all sides of the place, and a chosen band—among whom stood Sir William Stanley on foot, and an officer of high rank on horseback—occupying the central space immediately in front of the town house.²

¹ Reyd, vi. 96.

² Bor, ii. xxii. 878, 879. Reyd, vi. 96, 97. Strada, ii. 467. Hoofd,

The drums then beat, and proclamation went forth through the city that all burghers, without any distinction,—municipal guards and all,—were to repair forthwith to the city hall and deposit their arms. As the inhabitants arose from their slumbers and sallied forth into the streets to inquire the cause of the disturbance, they soon discovered that they had, in some mysterious manner, been entrapped. Wild Irishmen, with uncouth garb, threatening gesture, and unintelligible jargon, stood gibbering at every corner, instead of the comfortable Flemish faces of the familiar burgher guard. The chief burgomaster, sleeping heavily after Sir William's hospitable banquet, aroused himself at last, and sent a militia captain to inquire the cause of the unseasonable drum-beat and monstrous proclamation. Day was breaking as the trusty captain made his way to the scene of action. The wan light of a cold, drizzly January morning showed him the wide, stately square, with its leafless lime-trees and its tall, many-storied, gable-ended houses rising dim and spectral through the mist, filled to overflowing with troops, whose uniforms and banners resembled nothing that he remembered in Dutch and English regiments. Fires were lighted at various corners, kettles were boiling, and camp-followers and sutlers were crouching over them, half perished with cold,—for it had been raining dismally all night,¹—while burghers, with wives and children, startled from their dreams by the sudden reveille, stood gaping about, with

Vervolgh, 220, 221. Le Petit, ii. 341. Wagenaer, viii. 196 seq.

¹ "Ongeacht dat ze de gantsche nacht gereyst hadden, in seer quaet en kout weder, ende dat het den selven voormiddags oock roghende," etc.—Reyd, vi. 96.

perplexed faces and despairing gestures. As he approached the town house—one of those magnificent, many-towered, highly decorated municipal palaces of the Netherlands—he found troops all around it; troops guarding the main entrance, troops on the great external staircase leading to the front balcony, and officers, in yellow jerkin and black bandoleer, grouped in the balcony itself.

The Flemish captain stood bewildered, when suddenly the familiar form of Stanley detached itself from the central group and advanced toward him. Taking him by the hand with much urbanity, Sir William led the militiaman through two or three ranks of soldiers, and presented him to the strange officer on horseback.¹

“Colonel Tassis,” said he, “I recommend to you a very particular friend of mine. Let me bespeak your best offices in his behalf.”

“Ah, God!” cried the honest burgher, “Tassis! Tassis! Then are we indeed most miserably betrayed.”²

Even the Spanish colonel, who was of Flemish origin, was affected by the despair of the Netherlander.

“Let those look to the matter of treachery whom it concerns,” said he; “my business here is to serve the king, my master.”

“‘Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things which are God’s,’” said Stanley, with piety.³

The burgher captain was then assured that no harm was intended to the city, but that it now belonged to his Most Catholic Majesty of Spain—Colonel Stanley, to whom its custody had been intrusted, having freely and deliberately restored it to its lawful owner. He was

¹ Reynd, vi. 96.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

then bid to go and fetch the burgomasters and magistrates.

Presently they appeared, a dismal group, weeping and woebegone—the same board of strict Calvinists forcibly placed in office but three months before by Leicester, through the agency of this very Stanley, who had so summarily ejected their popish predecessors, and who only the night before had so handsomely feasted themselves. They came forward, the tears running down their cheeks, crying indeed so piteously that even Stanley began to weep bitterly himself. “I have not done this,” he sobbed, “for power or pelf. Not the hope of reward, but the love of God, hath moved me.”¹

Presently some of the ex-magistrates made their appearance, and a party of leading citizens went into a private house with Tassis and Stanley to hear statements and explanations—as if any satisfactory ones were possible.

Sir William, still in a melancholy tone, began to make a speech, through an interpreter, and again to protest that he had not been influenced by love of lucre. But

¹ “Sir William Stanley did fetch some of the commons and magistrates to come and welcome Taxis. With weeping tears and sad countenances they gave him reverence, sorry to see themselves so betrayed.

“When Sir William Stanley did see the pitiful state and sorrowful hearts of the burghers, God made him have some feeling of his sins. His own conscience, it seemed, accused him, and he *wept with the burghers for company*, protesting with vehement words and oaths that he had done it with no covetous mind for profit, but only for the discharge of his conscience. It is now said he hath and shall have thirty thousand pounds.”—Sir John Conway to Walsingham, January 28, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

Compare Reyd, *ubi sup.*; Wilkes to Leicester, MS. before cited; Norris to Burghley, January 21 (31), 1587, S. P. Office MS.

as he stammered and grew incoherent as he approached the point, Tassis suddenly interrupted the conference. "Let us look after our soldiers," said he, "for they have been marching in the foul weather half the night." So the Spanish troops, who had been standing patiently to be rained upon after their long march, until the burghers had all deposited their arms in the city hall, were now billeted on the townspeople. Tassis gave peremptory orders that no injury should be offered to persons or property on pain of death, and, by way of wholesome example, hung several Hibernians the same day who had been detected in plundering the inhabitants.¹

The citizens were, as usual in such cases, offered the choice between embracing the Catholic religion or going into exile, a certain interval being allowed them to wind up their affairs. They were also required to furnish Stanley and his regiment full pay *for the whole period of their service* since coming to the provinces, and to Tassis three months' wages for his Spaniards in advance.² Stanley offered his troops the privilege of remaining with him in the service of Spain, or of taking their departure unmolested. The Irish troops were quite

¹ Reyd, ubi sup.

² Wilkes to Leicester, January 24, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

"From the market-place Taxis and Stanley went to the town house, whither the woeful magistrates were called and made to welcome Taxis, and were then required with all expedition to furnish and make ready so much money as should pay all the arrearage due to Stanley and his regiment sithence their coming into these countries, who had received a month's pay of the states not eight days before he received the enemy into the town. They were also required to furnish and deliver as much more money as might give three months to the troops of the enemy then newly entered."

willing to continue under their old chieftain, particularly as it was intimated to them that there was an immediate prospect of a brisk campaign in their native island against the tyrant Elizabeth, under the liberating banners of Philip. And certainly, in an age where religion constituted country, these fervent Catholics could scarcely be censured for taking arms against the sovereign who persecuted their religion and themselves. These honest barbarians had broken no oath, violated no trust, had never pretended sympathy with freedom or affection for their queen. They had fought fiercely under the chief who led them into battle, they had robbed and plundered voraciously as opportunity served, and had been occasionally hanged for their exploits; but Deventer and Fort Zutphen had not been confided to their keeping, and it was a pleasant thought to them, that approaching invasion of Ireland.

“I will ruin the whole country from Holland to Friesland,” said Stanley to Captain Newton, “and then I will play such a game in Ireland as the queen has never seen the like all the days of her life.”¹

Newton had already been solicited by Rowland Yorke to

¹ “Que le Colonel Stanley lui a preferé, Je me comporterai tellement que le pays jusqu'en Hollande et entre Wezel et Embden, serent en tout ruiné, dedans six jours; et causerai en Irlande tel jeu de guerre que la Reine n'a vu en sa vie.”—Examination of Captain Thomas Newton touching the loss of Deventer, before the council of state, January 21 (31), 1587, S. P. Office MS.

“That he [Lieutenant John Reenan, in Stanley's service, an earnest man] may deliver to Sir Francis Walsingham some circumstance of the surrendering of Deventer, and what speeches passed from Sir William Stanley teaching Ireland, whither he thinks to be sent to work her Majesty some trouble and anney, if he shall be able.”—Sir John Norris to F. Walsingham, January 29, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

take service under Parma, and had indignantly declined. Sir Edmund Carey and his men, four hundred in all, refused to a man to take part in the monstrous treason, and were allowed to leave the city.¹ This was the case with all the English officers. Stanley and Yorke were the only gentlemen who on this occasion sullied the honor of England.

Captain Henchman, who had been taken prisoner in a skirmish a few days before the surrender of Deventer, was now brought to that city, and earnestly entreated by Tassis and by Stanley to seize this opportunity of entering the service of Spain.

"You shall have great advancement and preferment," said Tassis. "His Catholic Majesty has got ready very many ships for Ireland, and *Sir William Stanley is to be general of the expedition.*"

"And you shall choose your own preferment," said Stanley, "for I know you to be a brave man."

"I would rather," replied Henchman, "serve my prince in loyalty as a beggar than to be known and reported a rich traitor, with breach of conscience."

"Continue so," replied Stanley, unabashed; "for this is the very principle of my own enlargement, for before I served the devil, and now I am serving God."

The offers and the arguments of the Spaniard and the renegade were powerless with the blunt captain, and notwithstanding "divers other traitorous allegements by Sir William for his most vile facts," as Henchman expressed it, that officer remained in poverty and captivity until such time as he could be exchanged.²

¹ Wilkes to Leicester, January 24, 1587, MS. before cited.

² Henry Henchman to Walsingham, March 22, 1587, S. P. Office MS. *Totidem verbis.*

Stanley subsequently attempted in various ways to defend his character. He had a commission from Leicester, he said, to serve whom he chose—as if the governor-general had contemplated his serving Philip II. with that commission; he had a passport to go whither he liked—as if his passport entitled him to take the city of Deventer along with him; he owed no allegiance to the states; he was discharged from his promise to the earl; he was his own master; he wanted neither money nor preferment; he had been compelled by his conscience and his duty to God to restore the city to its lawful master, and so on, and so on.¹

But whether he owed the states allegiance or not, it is certain that he had accepted their money to relieve himself and his troops eight days before his treason. That Leicester had discharged him from his promises to such an extent as to justify his surrendering a town committed to his honor for safe-keeping certainly deserved no answer; that his duty to conscience required him to restore the city argued a somewhat tardy awakening of that monitor in the breast of the man who three months before had wrested the place with the armed hand from men suspected of Catholic inclinations; that his first motive, however, was not the mere love of money, was doubtless true. Attachment to his religion, a desire to atone for his sins against it, the insidious temptings of his evil spirit, Yorke,² who was the chief organizer of the

¹ Bor, *Reyd, Strada, Hoofd (Vervolgh), Le Petit, Wagenaer*, ubi sup. *Bentivoglio*, p. ii. l. v. 312. *F. Haraei Ann.*, iii. 398. *Camden*, iii. 397, 398.

² According to *Camden*, Yorke had persuaded Stanley that he had been accused by the conspirators of being engaged in the Babington plot, and that he was “forthwith to be sent into England to be hanged.” *Haraeus* (ubi sup.) has a slight allusion to the

conspiracy, and the prospect of gratifying a wild and wicked ambition—these were the springs that moved him. Sums varying from thirty thousand pounds to a pension of fifteen hundred pistolets a year were mentioned as the stipulated price of his treason by Norris, Wilkes, Conway, and others;¹ but the Duke of Parma, in narrating the whole affair in a private letter to the king, explicitly stated that he had found Stanley “singularly disinterested.”

“The colonel was only actuated by religious motives,” he said, “asking for no reward except that he might serve in his Majesty’s army thenceforth—and this is worthy to be noted.”²

At the same time it appears from this correspondence that the duke recommended, and that the king bestowed, a merced, which Stanley did not refuse;³ and it was

same effect, but I have found no other intimation of this very improbable suspicion with regard to Sir William. The English historian also states that after the treason Stanley called his troops the seminary regiment of soldiers, to defend the Romish religion by their swords, as the seminary priests by their writings. Cardinal Allen praised his deed in his famous book, and excited all others to go and do likewise (Camden, iii. 398).

¹ MS. letters before cited. Doyley to Walsingham, March 25, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

² “Que ha sido de nota,” etc.—Parma to Philip II., February 12, 1587, Arch. de Sim. MS.

³ Ibid. Compare Bentivoglio, p. ii. l. v. 312. “Era Cattolico lo Stanley, e mostró di farlo per zelo principalmente di Religione,” says the cardinal, “contucció ne fu *premiato largamente* dal Ré, e tanto piu, perche egli tiró seco nel medesimo servitio *tutti gli Inglesi* ch’eravano in Deventer,” etc. This last statement we have seen to be entirely a mistake.

Compare Strada, ii. 468, 469, who is very emphatic with regard to the purity of Stanley’s motives: “Motum se ad dedendam

very well known that to no persons in the world was Philip apt to be so generous as to men of high rank, Flemish, Walloon, or English, who deserted the cause of his rebellious subjects to serve under his own banners. Yet, strange to relate, almost at the very moment that Stanley was committing his fatal act of treason in order that he might open a high career for his ambition, a most brilliant destiny was about to dawn upon him. The queen had it in contemplation, in recompense for his distinguished services, and by advice of Leicester, to bestow great honors and titles upon him, and to appoint him viceroy of Ireland—of that very country which he was now proposing, as an enemy to his sovereign and as the purchased tool of a foreign despot, to invade.¹

Stanley's subsequent fate was obscure. A price of three thousand florins was put by the states upon his head and upon that of Yorke.² He went to Spain, and afterward returned to the provinces. He was even reported to have become, through the judgment of God,

urbem Stanlaeus adjunxit, non largitionibus, aut honorum titulis, proditorum pretiis; quae quamvis oblata respuerit uti aliena à majorum claritudine, vitaeque suae," etc. The Jesuit adds that the duke warmly adjured his sovereign not to allow such disinterestedness to go unrewarded—and it did not.

¹ This is stated distinctly by Leicester in his letter to the States-General, on first being informed of the surrender of Deventer: "L'affection et soing qu'ay toujours eu à la conservation de l'estat des provces unies m'augmentent tant plus de regret qu'ay eu d'entendre la trahison de la ville de Deventer, qu'elle a este forme par la lascheté de celuy auquel S. M. eut voulu confier royaumes entiers et lequel elle pensoit annoblir des plus grands titres avecq' recompenses condignes, pour le promouvoir à la dignité de Vice Roy d'Irlande," etc.—Leicester to the States-General, February 2 (12), 1587, Hague Archives MS.

² Bor, ii. xxii. 882. Wagenaer, viii. 199.

a lunatic,¹ although the tale wanted confirmation; and it is certain that at the close of the year he had mustered his regiment under Farnese, prepared to join the duke in the great invasion of England.²

Rowland Yorke, who was used to such practices, cheerfully consummated his crime on the same day that witnessed the surrender of Deventer. He rode up to the gates of that city on the morning of the 29th January, inquired quietly whether Tassis was master of the place, and then galloped furiously back the ten miles to his fort. Entering, he called his soldiers together, bade them tear in pieces the colors of England, and follow him into the city of Zutphen.³ Two companies of states' troops offered resistance, and attempted to hold the place; but they were overpowered by the English and Irish, assisted by a force of Spaniards, who, by a concerted movement,

¹ "By letters from Deventer they write that the traitor Stanley groweth frantic,—a just punishment of God,—and his men very poor and in misery. The other traitor, Yorke, has been seen of late in Antwerp and Brussels, little regarded, whose determination is to go to Spain or Naples, there to live on his stipend, out of the stir of these wars, fearing that which I hope to God he shall never escape."—Captain Ed. Burnham to Walsingham, March 7, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

"It is bruited that Stanley was now lately become a lunatic, void of government and discretion. . . . If this be true, as he was known for a traitor, so he may be noted for a fool."—Lloyd to Walsingham, October 15, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

² "Among them, Sir William Stanley was the leader of his companies, eight hundred or nine hundred men, the most part Irish and Scotch, and the rest English. I heard an Italian captain report that Stanley's companies were the best that they make account of."—John Giles to Walsingham, December 4, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

³ Wilkes to Leicester, January 24, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

made their appearance from the town. He received a handsome reward, having far surpassed the Duke of Parma's expectations when he made his original offer of service. He died very suddenly, after a great banquet at Deventer, in the course of the same year, not having succeeded in making his escape into Spain to live at ease on his stipend. It was supposed that he was poisoned; but the charge in those days was a common one, and nobody cared to investigate the subject. His body was subsequently exhumed, when Deventer came into the hands of the patriots, and with impotent and contemptible malice hanged upon a gibbet. This was the end of Rowland Yorke.¹

Parma was highly gratified, as may be imagined, at such successful results. "Thus Fort Zutphen," said he, "about which there have been so many fisticuffs, and Deventer—which was the real object of the last campaign, and which has cost the English so much blood and money, and is the safety of Groningen and of all those provinces—are now your Majesty's. Moreover, the effect of this treason must be to sow great distrust between the English and the rebels, who will henceforth never know in whom they can confide."²

Parma was very right in this conjecture. Moreover, there was just then a fearful run against the states. The castle of Wauw, within a league of Bergen-op-Zoom, which had been intrusted to one Le Marchand, a Frenchman in the service of the Republic, was delivered by him to Parma for sixteen thousand florins. "'T is a very

¹ Bor, Reyd, Hoofd, Wagenaer, Strada, Bentivoglio, Camden, Le Petit, Haraeus, loc. cit. Baker's Chronicle, 385. Meteren, xiv. 245-250. MS. letters already cited.

² Parma to Philip II., February 12, 1587, Arch. de Sim. MS.

important post," said the duke, "and the money was well laid out."¹

The loss of the city of Guelders, capital of the province of the same name, took place in the summer. This town belonged to the jurisdiction of Martin Schenck, and was his chief place of deposit for the large and miscellaneous property acquired by him during his desultory, but most profitable, freebooting career. The famous partizan was then absent, engaged in a lucrative job in the way of his profession. He had made a contract, in a very businesslike way, with the states to defend the city of Rheinberg and all the country round against the Duke of Parma, pledging himself to keep on foot for that purpose an army of thirty-three hundred foot and seven hundred horse. For this extensive and important operation he was to receive twenty thousand florins a month from the general exchequer, and in addition he was to be allowed the brandschatz—the blackmail, that is to say—of the whole countryside, and the taxation upon all vessels going up and down the river before Rheinberg—an ad valorem duty, in short, upon all river merchandise, assessed and collected in summary fashion.² A tariff thus enforced was not likely to be a mild one; and although the states considered that they had got a "good pennyworth" by the job, it was no easy thing to get the better, in a bargain, of the vigilant Martin, who was as thrifty a speculator as he was a desperate fighter. A more accomplished highwayman, artistically and enthusiastically devoted to his pursuit, never lived. No-

¹ Parma to Philip II., MS. last cited. Compare Bor, ii. xxii. 878; Strada, ii. 466; Wagenaer, viii. 196; Haraeus, iii. 397, et mult. al.

² Wilkes to Leicester, December 3, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

body did his work more thoroughly, nobody got himself better paid for his work; and Thomas Wilkes, that excellent man of business, thought the states not likely to make much by their contract.¹ Nevertheless, it was a comfort to know that the work would not be neglected.

Schenck was accordingly absent, jobbing the Rheinberg siege, and in his place one Aristotle Patton, a Scotch colonel in the states' service, was commandant of Guelders. Now, the thrifty Scot had an eye to business, too, and was no more troubled with qualms of conscience than Rowland Yorke himself. Moreover, he knew himself to be in great danger of losing his place, for Leicester was no friend to him, and intended to supersede him. Patton had also a decided grudge against Martin Schenck, for that truculent personage had recently administered to him a drubbing, which no doubt he had richly deserved.² Accordingly, when the Duke of Parma made a secret offer to him of thirty-six thousand florins if he would quietly surrender the city intrusted to him, the colonel jumped at so excellent an opportunity of circumventing Leicester, feeding his grudge against Martin, and making a handsome fortune for himself. He knew his trade too well, however, to accept the offer too eagerly, and bargained awhile for better terms, and to such good purpose that it was agreed he should have not only the thirty-six thousand florins, but all the horses, arms, plate, furniture, and other movables in the city belonging to Schenck that he could lay his hands upon. Here were revenge and solid damages for the

¹ Wilkes to Leicester, December 3, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Strada, ii. 500. Baudartii Polemographia, ii. 90. Compare Wagenaer, viii. 226, who is the authority for the illustrious pagan name of the Scot.

unforgotten assault and battery, — for Schenck's property alone made no inconsiderable fortune, — and accordingly the city, toward midsummer, was surrendered to the Seigneur d'Haultepenne.¹ Moreover, the excellent Patton had another and a loftier motive. He was in love. He had also a rival. The lady of his thoughts was the widow of Pontus de Noyelle, Seigneur de Bours, who had once saved the citadel of Antwerp, and afterward sold that city and himself. His rival was no other than the great Seigneur de Champagny, brother of Cardinal Granvelle, eminent as soldier, diplomatist, and financier, but now growing old, not in affluent circumstances, and much troubled with the gout. Madame de Bours had, however, accepted his hand, and had fixed the day for the wedding, when the Scotchman, thus suddenly enriched, renewed a previously unsuccessful suit. The widow then, partially keeping her promise, actually celebrated her nuptials on the appointed evening; but, to the surprise of the provinces, she became not the *haulte et puissante dame de Champagny*, but Mrs. Aristotile Patton.²

For this last treason neither Leicester nor the English were responsible. Patton was not only a Scot, but a follower of Hohenlo, as Leicester loudly protested.³ Le

¹ Strada, ii. 500. Leicester to Walsingham, July 4, August 4, 1587. Lloyd to Walsingham, July 3, 1587. S. P. Office MSS. But Strada states that the plate and other property were reserved to the Spanish government.

² Baudart, ubi sup. Le Petit, ii. 346, 347.

³ "It is so that Guelders is lost, given up by Patton, the Scotchman, and commanded thither by the Count Holloek, and hath been wholly at his direction and commandment. Yet for the good nature of Norris and Wilkes, so soon as they heard of this, reported to the states that this Patton was a colonel of my prefer-

Marchand was a Frenchman. But Deventer and Zutphen were places of vital importance, and Stanley an Englishman of highest consideration, one who had been deemed worthy of the command in chief in Leicester's absence. Moreover, a cornet in the service of the earl's nephew, Sir Robert Sydney, had been seen at Zutphen in conference with Tassis, and the horrible suspicion went abroad that even the illustrious name of Sydney was to be polluted also.¹ This fear was fortunately false, although the cornet was unquestionably a traitor, with whom the enemy had been tampering; but the mere thought that Sir Robert Sydney could betray the trust reposed in him was almost enough to make the still unburied corpse of his brother arise from the dead.

Parma was right when he said that all confidence of the Netherlanders in the Englishmen would now be gone, and that the provinces would begin to doubt their best friends. No fresh treasons followed, but they were expected every day. An organized plot to betray the country was believed in, and a howl of execration swept through the land. The noble deeds of Sydney and Willoughby, and Norris and Pelham, and Roger Williams, the honest and valuable services of Wilkes, the generosity and courage of Leicester, were for a season forgotten. The English were denounced in every city and village of the Netherlands as traitors and miscreants. Respectable English merchants went from hostelry to

ment to make the people to hate me," etc.—Leicester to Walsingham, July 2, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

It will be perceived that this occurrence has been placed in juxtaposition with similar occurrences in the narrative, although a few months removed from them in chronological sequence.

¹ Examination of Newton, MS. before cited. Compare Meteren, xiv. 249, 250; Reyd, vi. 97, 98.

hostelry, and from town to town, and were refused a lodging for love or money. The nation was put under ban.¹ A most melancholy change from the beginning of the year, when the very men who were now loudest in denunciation and fiercest in hate had been the warmest friends of Elizabeth, of England, and of Leicester.

At Hohenlo's table the opinion was loudly expressed, even in the presence of Sir Roger Williams, that it was highly improbable, if a man like Stanley, of such high rank in the kingdom of England, of such great connections and large means, could commit such a treason, that he could do so without the knowledge and consent of her Majesty.²

Barneveldt, in council of state, declared that Leicester, by his restrictive letter of 24th November, had intended to carry the authority over the Republic into England, in order to dispose of everything at his pleasure, in conjunction with the English cabinet council, and that the country had never been so cheated by the French as it had now been by the English, and that their government had become insupportable.³

Councilor Carl Roorda maintained at the table of Elector Truchses that the country had fallen *de tyrannide in tyrannidem*, and, if they had spurned the oppression of the Spaniards and the French, that it was now time to rebel against the English. Barneveldt and Buys loudly declared that the provinces were able to

¹ Wilkes to Hatton, January 24, 1587. Memorial given to Sir Roger Williams, February, 1587. Wilkes to the queen, February 16, 1587. S. P. Office MSS.

² "Abuses offered to her Majesty and his Excellency and the whole English nation by the states and others," April, 1587, S. P. Office MS. Sir J. Norris to Walsingham, March 25, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

³ Abuses, etc., MS. before cited.

protect themselves without foreign assistance, and that it was very injurious to impress a contrary opinion upon the public mind.¹

The whole college of the States-General came before the state council, and demanded the name of the man to whom the earl's restrictive letter had been delivered—that document by which the governor had dared surreptitiously to annul the authority which publicly he had delegated to that body, and thus to deprive it of the power of preventing anticipated crimes. After much colloquy the name of Brackel was given, and, had not the culprit fortunately been absent, his life might have been in danger, for rarely had grave statesmen been so thoroughly infuriated.²

No language can exaggerate the consequences of this wretched treason. Unfortunately, too, the abject condition to which the English troops had been reduced by the niggardliness of their sovereign was an additional cause of danger. Leicester was gone, and since her favorite was no longer in the Netherlands, the queen seemed to forget that there was a single Englishman upon that fatal soil. In *five months not one penny* had been sent to her troops. While the earl had been there one hundred and forty thousand pounds had been sent in seven or eight months. After his departure not five thousand pounds were sent in one half-year.³

The English soldiers, who had fought so well on every Flemish battle-field of freedom, had become, such as

¹ Abuses, etc., MS. before cited. Compare Strada, ii. 469; Bentivoglio, p. ii. l. iv. 312, 313; Bor, ii. xxii. 883; Wagenaer, viii. 199, et mult. al.

² Wilkes to Leicester, January 24, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

³ J. Norris to Walsingham, March 25, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

were left of them, mere famishing, half-naked vagabonds and marauders. Brave soldiers had been changed by their sovereign into brigands, and now the universal odium which suddenly attached itself to the English name converted them into outcasts. Forlorn and crippled creatures swarmed about the provinces, but were forbidden to come through the towns, and so wandered about, robbing hen-roosts and pillaging the peasantry.¹ Many deserted to the enemy. Many begged their way to England, and even to the very gates of the palace, and exhibited their wounds and their misery before the eyes of that good Queen Bess who claimed to be the mother of her subjects—and begged for bread in vain.²

The English cavalry, dwindled now to a body of five hundred, starving and mutinous, made a foray into Holland, rather as highwaymen than soldiers. Count Maurice commanded their instant departure, and Hohenlo swore that if the order were not instantly obeyed he would put himself at the head of his troops and cut every man of them to pieces.³ A most painful and humiliating condition for brave men who had been fighting the battles of their queen and of the Republic, to behold themselves, through the parsimony of the one and the infuriated sentiment of the other, compelled to starve, to rob, or to be massacred by those whom they had left their homes to defend!

At last honest Wilkes, ever watchful of his duty, succeeded in borrowing eight hundred pounds sterling for

¹ Wilkes to the queen, February 16, 1587. Same to Walsingham, January 19, 1587. S. P. Office MSS.

² Memorial (in Burghley's hand) of things to be declared, November, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

³ Wilkes to Leicester, March 12, 1587, MS.

two months by "pawning his own carcass," as he expressed himself. This gave the troopers about thirty shillings a man, with which relief they became, for a time, contented and well disposed.¹

Is this picture exaggerated? Is it drawn by pencils hostile to the English nation or the English queen? It is her own generals and confidential counselors who have told a story, in all its painful details, which has hardly

¹ Wilkes to Leicester, March 12, 1587, MS. "So great is the lack of discipline among the garrisons," wrote Wilkes, "especially of our nation, that I am ashamed to hear the continual complaints which come to this council against them. And albeit Sir John Norris and I have written often unto the captains and governors to see reformation had of the insolences and disorders of their soldiers within the towns, it is notwithstanding so slenderly respected as there followeth no amendment at all; so as we begin to grow as hateful to the people as the *Spaniard himself, who governeth his towns of conquest with a milder hand than we do our friends and allies*. The causes hereof we find to be two. The one is for lack of pay, without which it is impossible to preserve discipline among the soldiers, and most of the troops in her Majesty's pay (excepting the garrisons of Brill and Flushing) have not been paid from the beginning of September last, being now about five months. The other is lack of government in the captains and officers, who for the most part are either such as never served before, and have no judgment, no, not to rule themselves, or such as make their profit of the poor soldiers so extremely as they are hateful to the companies, wherein if there is no redress, it were better her Majesty did revoke all; for as the case of the common soldier now standeth, the states receive little or no service of them but spoil and ruin of their towns and countries."—Wilkes to Walsingham, January 19, 1587, MS.

And again he writes to the queen about "the weakness and confusion to which her troops are reduced for want of pay, having received nothing from 1st September to that day" (16th February). "The captains of the horsemen," he says, "are all in England, and thereby the most of the companies evil led and governed,

found a place in other chronicles. The parsimony of the great queen must ever remain a blemish on her character, and it was never more painfully exhibited than toward her brave soldiers in Flanders in the year 1587. Thomas Wilkes, a man of truth and a man of accounts, had informed Elizabeth that the expenses of one year's war, since Leicester had been governor-general, had amounted to exactly five hundred and seventy-

committing daily upon the villages and people extreme spoils, insolences, and mischiefs, which, together with the example of the late treasons of Stanley and Yorke, hath drawn our nation into the hatred of this people very deeply, so as they are for the most part turned out of the towns, and refused to be taken into garrison. The horsemen, destitute of money and food, are, without order, entered now into Holland (an unfit place for their abode), where the people are risen against them, and they, to the number of five hundred or six hundred, in terms either themselves to do mischief, or themselves to be cut in pieces by the country—a case very lamentable to us that feel the grief of so hard a choice, and can find almost no way to prevent the peril. I have urged the states by earnest letters (myself being at this present sick, by God's visitation, to the danger of my life) to take some order to relieve your people in this distress, myself offering my carcass in pawn, to answer as much as they shall eat, after a certain rate. I find them reasonably inclined, yet affected by two impediments—a strange jealousy, by them conceived of all our nation; the other their own want. . . . The confusions are wonderful that are grown in this state in the absence of my Lord of Leicester, which hath opened many gaps to disorder," etc.—Wilkes to the queen, February 16, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

And once more he writes: "I saw no remedy for them but to engage myself for some means to feed them until other order might be taken, whereupon, with the help of mine own credit, and pawn of my own carcass, to repay at the end of two months eight hundred pounds which I divided among the companies distressed, being eight in number, which extended to thirty shillings a man," etc.—Wilkes to Leicester, March 12, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

nine thousand three hundred and sixty pounds and nineteen shillings, of which sum one hundred and forty-six thousand three hundred and eighty-six pounds and eleven shillings had been spent by her Majesty, and the balance had been paid or was partly owing by the states.¹ These were not agreeable figures, but the figures of honest accountants rarely flatter, and Wilkes was not one of those financiers who have the wish or the gift to make things pleasant. He had transmitted the accounts just as they had been delivered, certified by the treasurers of the states and by the English paymasters, and the queen was appalled at the sums total. She could never proceed with such a war as that, she said, and she declined a loan of sixty thousand pounds which the states requested, besides stoutly refusing to advance her darling Robin a penny to pay off the mortgages upon two thirds of his estates, on which the equity of redemption was fast expiring, or to give him the slightest help in furnishing him forth anew for the wars.

Yet not one of her statesmen doubted that these Netherland battles were English battles, almost as much as if the fighting-ground had been the Isle of Wight or the coast of Kent, the charts of which the statesmen and generals of Spain were daily conning.

Wilkes, too, while defending Leicester stoutly behind his back, doing his best to explain his shortcomings, lauding his courage and generosity, and advocating his beloved theory of popular sovereignty with much ingenuity and eloquence, had told him the truth to his face. Although assuring him that if he came back soon he might rule the states "as a schoolmaster doth his

¹ Wilkes to Walsingham, January 12, 1587. Same to Burghley, January 12, 1587. S. P. Office MSS.

boys,"¹ he did not fail to set before him the disastrous effects of his sudden departure and of his protracted absence; he had painted in darkest colors the results of the Deventer treason, he had unveiled the cabals against his authority, he had repeatedly and vehemently implored his return; he had informed the queen that, notwithstanding some errors of administration, he was much the fittest man to represent her in the Netherlands, and that he could accomplish, by reason of his experience, more in three months than any other man could do in a year. He had done his best to reconcile the feuds which existed between him and important personages in the Netherlands, he had been the author of the complimentary letters sent to him in the name of the States-General, to the great satisfaction of the queen; but he had not given up his friendship with Sir John Norris, because, he said, "the virtues of the man made him as worthy of love as any one living, and because the more he knew him, the more he had cause to affect and to admire him."²

This was the unpardonable offense, and for this, and for having told the truth about the accounts, Leicester denounced Wilkes to the queen as a traitor and a hypocrite, and threatened repeatedly to take his life. He had even the meanness to prejudice Burghley against him, by insinuating to the lord treasurer that he too had been maligned by Wilkes, and thus most effectually damaged the character of the plain-spoken councilor with the queen and many of her advisers, notwithstanding that he plaintively besought her to "allow him to reiter-

¹ Wilkes to Walsingham, February 17, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

² Ibid. Same to the queen, February 16, 1587. Same to Walsingham, May 17, 1587. S. P. Office MSS.

ate his sorry song, as doth the cuckoo, that she would please not condemn her poor servant unheard.”¹

Immediate action was taken on the Deventer treason, and on the general relations between the States-General and the English government. Barneveldt immediately drew up a severe letter to the Earl of Leicester. On the 2d February Wilkes came by chance into the assembly of the States-General, with the rest of the councilors, and found Barneveldt just demanding the public reading of that document. The letter was read. Wilkes then rose and made a few remarks.

“The letter seems rather sharp upon his Excellency,” he observed. “There is not a word in it,” answered Barneveldt, curtly, “that is not perfectly true”; and with this he cut the matter short, and made a long speech upon other matters which were then before the assembly.

Wilkes, very anxious as to the effect of the letter both upon public feeling in England and upon his own position as English councilor, waited immediately upon Count Maurice, President van der Myle, and upon Viliers, the clergyman, and implored their interposition to prevent the transmission of the epistle. They promised to make an effort to delay its despatch or to mitigate its tone. A fortnight afterward, however, Wilkes learned with dismay that the document (the leading passages of which will be given hereafter) had been sent to its destination.²

¹ Wilkes to the queen, February 8, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

² Wilkes to Walsingham, May 17, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

Compare Wagenaer, viii. 201, who states that the famous 4th of February letter was read and approved by Wilkes. This is an error, as appears in the narrative given in the text from the MS. letter-book of Wilkes.

Meantime a consultation of civilians and of the family council of Count Maurice was held, and it was determined that the count should assume the title of prince more formally than he had hitherto done,¹ in order that the actual head of the Nassaus might be superior in rank to Leicester or to any man who could be sent from England. Maurice was also appointed by the states, provisionally, governor-general, with Hohenlo for his lieutenant-general.² That formidable personage, now fully restored to health, made himself very busy in securing towns and garrisons for the party of Holland, and in cashiering all functionaries suspected of English tendencies. Especially he became most intimate with Count Meurs, stadholder of Utrecht,—the hatred of which individual and his wife toward Leicester and the English nation, springing originally from the unfortunate babble of Otheman, had grown more intense than ever,—“banqueting and feasting” with him all day long, and concocting a scheme by which, for certain considerations, the province of Utrecht was to be annexed to Holland under the perpetual stadholderate of Prince Maurice.

¹ Memorial given by Wilkes to Sir R. Williams, February, 1587, S. P. Office MS. Compare *Le Petit*, ii. xiv. 541; *Wagenaer*, viii. 203, 204.

² *Meteren*, xiv. 250. *Wagenaer*, viii. 204. *Reyd*, vi. 100.

CHAPTER XIV

Leicester in England—Trial of the Queen of Scots—Fearful perplexity at the English court—Infatuation and obstinacy of the queen—Netherland envoys in England—Queen's bitter invective against them—Amazement of the envoys—They consult with her chief councilors—Remarks of Burghley and Davison—Fourth of February letter from the states—Its severe language toward Leicester—Painful position of the envoys at court—Queen's parsimony toward Leicester.

THE scene shifts, for a brief interval, to England. Leicester had reached the court late in November. Those "blessed beams," under whose shade he was wont to find so much "refreshment and nutrition," had again fallen with full radiance upon him. "Never since I was born," said he, "did I receive a more gracious welcome."¹ Alas! there was not so much benignity for the starving English soldiers, nor for the provinces, which were fast growing desperate; but although their cause was so intimately connected with the "great cause," which then occupied Elizabeth almost to the exclusion of other matter, it was, perhaps, not wonderful, although unfortunate, that for a time the Netherlands should be neglected.

The "daughter of debate" had at last brought herself, it was supposed, within the letter of the law, and now

¹ Leicester to Wilkes, December 4, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

began those odious scenes of hypocrisy on the part of Elizabeth, that frightful comedy—more melancholy even than the solemn tragedy which it preceded and followed—which must ever remain the darkest passage in the history of the queen. It is unnecessary in these pages to make more than a passing allusion to the condemnation and death of the Queen of Scots. Who doubts her participation in the Babington conspiracy? Who doubts that she was the center of one endless conspiracy by Spain and Rome against the throne and life of Elizabeth? Who doubts that her long imprisonment in England was a violation of all law, all justice, all humanity? Who doubts that the fining, whipping, torturing, hanging, emboweling of men, women, and children, guilty of no other crime than adhesion to the Catholic faith, had assisted the pope and Philip, and their band of English, Scotch, and Irish conspirators, to shake Elizabeth's throne and endanger her life? Who doubts that had the English sovereign been capable of conceiving the great thought of religious toleration her reign would have been more glorious than it was, the cause of Protestantism and freedom more triumphant, the name of Elizabeth Tudor dearer to human hearts? Who doubts that there were many enlightened and noble spirits among her Protestant subjects who lifted up their voices, over and over again, in Parliament and out of it, to denounce that wicked persecution exercised upon their innocent Catholic brethren, which was fast converting loyal Englishmen, against their will, into traitors and conspirators? Yet who doubts that it would have required, at exactly that moment, and in the midst of that crisis, more elevation of soul than could fairly be predicated of any individual for Elizabeth in 1587 to pardon Mary, or to

relax in the severity of her legislation toward English papists?

Yet, although a display of sublime virtue such as the world has rarely seen was not to be expected, it was reasonable to look for honest and royal dealing from a great sovereign brought at last face to face with a great event. The great cause demanded a great, straightforward blow. It was obvious, however, that it would be difficult, in the midst of the tragedy and the comedy, for the Netherland business to come fairly before her Majesty. "Touching the Low Country causes," said Leicester, "very little is done yet, by reason of the continued business we have had about the Queen of Scots' matters. All the speech I have had with her Majesty hitherto touching those causes hath been but private."¹ Walsingham, longing for retirement, not only on account of "his infinite grief for the death of Sir Philip Sydney, which hath been the cause," he said, "that I have ever since betaken myself into solitariness and withdrawn from public affairs," but also by reason of the perverseness and difficulty manifested in the gravest affairs by the sovereign he so faithfully served, sent information that, notwithstanding the arrival of some of the states' deputies, Leicester was persuading her Majesty to proceed first in the great cause. "Certain principal persons, chosen as committees," he said, "of both houses, are sent as humble suitors to her Majesty to desire that she would be pleased to give order for the execution of the Scottish queen. Her Majesty made answer that she was loath to proceed in so violent a course against the said queen as the taking away of her life, and therefore prayed them to think of some other way which might be

¹ Leicester to Wilkes, December 4, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

for her own and their safety. They replied, no other way but her execution. Her Majesty, though she yielded no answer to this their latter reply, is contented to give order that the proclamation be published, and so also it is hoped that she will be moved by this their earnest instance to proceed to the thorough ending of the cause."¹

And so the cause went slowly on to its thorough ending. And when "no other way" could be thought of but to take Mary's life, and when "no other way" of taking that life could be "devised," at Elizabeth's suggestion, except by public execution, when none of the gentlemen "of the association," nor Paulet, nor Drury, —how skilfully soever their "pulses had been felt"² by Elizabeth's command,—would commit assassination to serve a queen who was capable of punishing them afterward for the murder, the great cause came to its inevitable conclusion, and Mary Stuart was executed by command of Elizabeth Tudor. The world may continue to differ as to the necessity of the execution, but it has long since pronounced a unanimous verdict as to the respective display of royal dignity by the two queens upon that great occasion.

During this interval the Netherland matter, almost as vital to England as the execution of Mary, was comparatively neglected. It was not absolutely in abeyance, but the condition of the queen's mind colored every state affair with its tragic hues. Elizabeth, harassed, anxious, dreaming dreams, and enacting a horrible masquerade, was in the worst possible temper to be approached by the envoys. She was furious with the Netherlanders for having maltreated her favorite. She was still more furi-

¹ Walsingham to Wilkes, December 3, 1586, S. P. Office MS.

² Davison, in Camden, iii. 393.

ous because their war was costing so much money. Her disposition became so uncertain, her temper so ungovernable, as to drive her councilors to their wits' ends. Burghley confessed himself "weary of his miserable life," and protested "that the only desire he had in the world was to be delivered from the ungrateful burden of service which her Majesty laid upon him so very heavily."¹ Walsingham wished himself "well established in Basel."² The queen set them all together by the ears. She wrangled spitefully over the sums total from the Netherlands; she worried Leicester, she scolded Burghley for defending Leicester, and Leicester abused Burghley for taking part against him.³

¹ Burghley to Leicester, February 7, 1587, Brit. Museum, Galba, c. xi. p. 252, MS.

² Walsingham to Wilkes, May 2, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

³ Burghley to Leicester, MS. before cited.

"Your Lordship is greatly offended," said the lord treasurer, "for my speeches in her Majesty's presence. What you conceive, my good lord, is best known to yourself; what I meant is best known to me; and I do avow in the presence of God that I no more meant to offend you in anything I spoke than I meant to offend the best and dearest friend I can imagine in England. And yet her Majesty many times chargeth me that I conceit, I flatter, I dare not speak anything that you should dislike. I see my hard fortune continueth to be subject to your doubtful opinion, howsoever I do behave myself. . . . You believe me to have moved her Majesty to be offended with you for lack of your procuring a more certainty of the expenses and accounts of the last year's charges on the states' behalf. . . . But I never did say, nor mean to say, that your Lordship ought to be blamed for those accounts; for I did say, and do still say, that their accounts are obscure, confused, and without credit. . . . I say that they ought to have been commanded by your authority to have reformed the same, and made your Lordship more privy to their doings. For not doing so I condemned them, and not your Lordship, who had so often

The lord treasurer, overcome with "grief which pierced both his body and his heart," battled his way, as best he could, through the throng of dangers which beset the path of England in that great crisis. It was most obvious to every statesman in the realm that this was not the time—when the gauntlet had been thrown full in the face of Philip and Sixtus and all Catholicism by the condemnation of Mary—to leave the Netherland cause "at random," and these outer bulwarks of her own kingdom insufficiently protected.

"Your Majesty will hear," wrote Parma to Philip, "of the disastrous, lamentable, and pitiful end of the poor Queen of Scots. Although for her it will be immortal glory, and she will be placed among the number of the many martyrs whose blood has been shed in the kingdom of England, and be crowned in heaven with a diadem more precious than the one she wore on earth, nevertheless one cannot repress one's natural emotions. I believe

complained that you were not better obeyed by them in those points. And so your Lordship did fully answer my speeches, and I also did affirm the same by often repetition to her Majesty that both in that as in many other things the states had grossly and most rudely encountered your Lordship. And although her Majesty was disposed to leave the cause unrelieved, persisting on her misliking of the accounts, and so to take occasion to deny their requests, yet I trust that your Lordship and the rest did see how earnest I was to draw her Majesty from these reckonings of expenses, and to take regard to the cause which *I said, and do say, may not now be left at random for respect* to any charges. I do persist in the opinion that her Majesty may not abandon the cause without manifest injury to her state, as the case and time now forceth her. . . . Your Lordship hath seen and heard her tax me very sharply that, in not applauding to her censures, I do commonly flatter you, and that I do against my conscience hold opinions to please you—a very hard case held against me."

firmly that this cruel deed will be the concluding crime of the many which that Englishwoman has committed, and that our Lord will be pleased that she shall at last receive the chastisement which she has these many long years deserved, and which has been reserved till now, for her greater ruin and confusion.”¹ And with this the duke proceeded to discuss the all-important and rapidly preparing invasion of England. Farnese was not the man to be deceived by the affected reluctance of Elizabeth before Mary’s scaffold, although he was soon to show that he was himself a master in the science of grimace. For Elizabeth, more than ever disposed to be friends with Spain and Rome, now that war to the knife was made inevitable, was wistfully regarding that trap of negotiation against which all her best friends were endeavoring to warn her. She was more ill-natured than ever to the provinces, she turned her back upon the Béarnese, she affronted Henry III. by affecting to believe in the fable of his envoy’s complicity in the Stafford conspiracy against her life.²

“I pray God to open her eyes,” said Walsingham, “to see the evident peril of the course she now holdeth. . . . If it had pleased her to have followed the advice given her touching the French ambassador, our ships had been released; . . . but she has taken a very strange course by writing a very sharp letter unto the French king, which I fear will cause him to give ear to those of the League, and make himself a party with them, seeing so

¹ Parma to Philip II., March 22, 1587, Arch. de Sim. MS.

² “Declaration of the negotiations with the French ambassador, L’Aubespine, at the lord treasurer’s house,” January 12, 1587, in Murdin, 579–583. Compare Mignet, *Hist. de Marie Stuart*, 3d edition, ii. 344 seq.

little regard had to him here. Your Lordship may see that our courage doth greatly increase, for that we make no difficulty to fall out with all the world. . . . I never saw her worse affected to the poor King of Navarre, and yet doth she seek in no sort to yield contentment to the French king. If to offend all the world," repeated the secretary, bitterly, "be a good cause of government, then can we not do amiss. . . . I never found her less disposed to take a course of prevention of the approaching mischiefs toward this realm than at this present. And, to be plain with you, there is none here that hath either credit or courage to deal effectually with her in any of her great causes."¹

Thus distracted by doubts and dangers, at war with her best friends, with herself, and with all the world, was Elizabeth during the dark days and months which preceded and followed the execution of the Scottish queen. If the great fight was at last to be fought triumphantly through, it was obvious that England was to depend upon Englishmen of all ranks and classes, upon her prudent and far-seeing statesmen, upon her nobles and her adventurers, on her Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman blood ever mounting against oppression, on Howard and Essex, Drake and Williams, Norris and Willoughby, upon high-born magnates, plebeian captains, London merchants, upon yeomen whose limbs were made in England, and upon Hollanders and Zealanders whose fearless mariners were to swarm to the protection of her coasts, quite as much in that year of anxious expectation as upon the great queen herself. Unquestionable as were her mental capacity and her more than

¹ Walsingham to Leicester, April 8, 1587. Same to same, April 10, 1587. Brit. Museum, Galba, c. xi. pp. 319-321. MSS.

woman's courage when fairly brought face to face with the danger, it was fortunately not on one man or woman's brain and arm that England's salvation depended in that crisis of her fate.

As to the provinces, no one ventured to speak very boldly in their defense. "When I lay before her the peril," said Walsingham, "she scorneth at it. The hope of a peace with Spain has put her into a most dangerous security."¹ Nor would any man now assume responsibility. The fate of Davison—of the man who had already in so detestable a manner been made the scapegoat for Leicester's sins in the Netherlands, and who had now been so barbarously sacrificed by the queen for faithfully obeying her orders in regard to the death-warrant—had sickened all courtiers and councilors for the time. "The late severe dealing used by her Highness toward Mr. Secretary Davison," said Walsingham to Wilkes, "maketh us very circumspect and careful not to proceed in anything but wherein we receive direction from herself, and therefore you must not find it strange if we now be more sparing than heretofore hath been accustomed."²

Such being the portentous state of the political atmosphere, and such the stormy condition of the royal mind, it may be supposed that the interviews of the Netherland envoys with her Majesty during this period were not likely to be genial. Exactly at the most gloomy moment—thirteen days before the execution of Mary—they came first into Elizabeth's presence at Greenwich.³

¹ Walsingham to Leicester, etc., MS. last cited.

² Walsingham to Wilkes, April 13, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

³ Brief van de Gedeputeerden uit England, February 9 (19), 1587, Hague Archives MS. Compare Bor, ii. xxii. 872 seq.; Wagenaer, viii. 214 seq.

The envoys were five in number, all of them experienced and able statesmen—Zuylen van Nyvelt, Joos de Menin, Nicasiaus de Silla, Jacob Falck, and Vitus van Kamminga.¹ The queen was in the Privy Council chamber, attended by the admiral of England, Lord Thomas Howard, Lord Hunsdon, great chamberlain, Sir Christopher Hatton, vice-chamberlain, Secretary Davison, and many other persons of distinction.

The letters of credence were duly presented, but it was obvious from the beginning of the interview that the queen was ill disposed toward the deputies, and had not only been misinformed as to matters of fact, but as to the state of feeling of the Netherlanders and of the States-General toward herself.²

Menin, however, who was an orator by profession, being pensionary of Dort, made, in the name of his colleagues, a brief but pregnant speech, to which the queen listened attentively, although with frequent indications of anger and impatience. He commenced by observing that the United Provinces still entertained the hope that her Majesty would conclude, upon further thoughts, to accept the sovereignty over them, with *reasonable conditions*; but the most important passages of his address were those relating to the cost of the war. "Besides our stipulated contributions," said the pensionary, "of two hundred thousand florins the month, we have furnished five hundred thousand as an extraordinary grant; making for the year two million nine hundred thousand florins, *and this over and above* the particular and special expenditures of the provinces, and

¹ Menin was pensionary of Dort, Silla pensionary of Amsterdam, Falck member of the state council (Wagenaer, viii. 192).

² Letter of the deputies last cited, Hague Archives MS.

other sums for military purposes. We confess, Madam, that the succor of your Majesty is a truly royal one, and that there have been few princes in history who have given such assistance to their neighbors unjustly oppressed. It is certain that by means of that help, joined with the forces of the United Provinces, the Earl of Leicester has been able to arrest the course of the Duke of Parma's victories and to counteract his designs. Nevertheless, it appears, Madam, that these forces have not been sufficient to drive the enemy out of the country. We are obliged, for regular garrison work and defense of cities, to keep up an army of at least twenty-seven thousand foot and thirty-five hundred horse. Of this number your Majesty pays five thousand foot and one thousand horse, and we are now commissioned, Madam, humbly to request an increase of your regular succor during the war to ten thousand foot and two thousand horse. We also implore the loan of sixty thousand pounds sterling, in order to assist us in maintaining for the coming season a sufficient force in the field."¹

Such, in brief, was the oration of Pensionary Menin, delivered in the French language. He had scarcely concluded when the queen, evidently in a great passion,² rose to her feet, and, without any hesitation, replied in a strain of vehement eloquence in the same tongue.

"Now I am not deceived, gentlemen," she said, "and that which I have been fearing has occurred. Our common adage, which we have in England, is a very good one. When one fears that an evil is coming, the sooner it arrives the better. Here is a quarter of a year that I

¹ Discours de Menin, Audience à Greenwich, Hague Archives MS.

² "Zeer gealtereert."—MS. letter, ubi sup.

have been expecting you, and certainly, for the great benefit I have conferred on you, you have exhibited a great ingratitude, and I consider myself very ill treated by you. 'T is very strange that you should begin by soliciting still greater succor, without rendering me any satisfaction for your past actions, which have been so extraordinary that I swear by the living God I think it impossible to find peoples or states more ungrateful or ill advised than yourselves.

"I have sent you this year fifteen, sixteen, aye, seventeen or eighteen thousand men. You have left them without payment; you have let some of them die of hunger, driven others to such desperation that they have deserted to the enemy. Is it not mortifying for the English nation and a great shame for you that Englishmen should say that they have found more courtesy from Spaniards than from Netherlanders? Truly, I tell you frankly that I will never endure such indignities. Rather will I act according to my will, and you may do exactly as you think best.

"If I chose, I could do something very good without you, although some persons are so fond of saying that it was quite necessary for the Queen of England to do what she does for her own protection. No, no! Dis-abuse yourselves of that impression. These are but false persuasions. Believe boldly that I can play an excellent game without your assistance, and a better one than I ever did with it.¹ Nevertheless, I do not choose to do that, nor do I wish you so much harm. But likewise do I not choose that you should hold such language to me.

¹ "Que je feroiy bien un bon parti sans vous y appeller, et meilleur que je nay fait oncques avecq vous."—Réponse de Sa Majesté au Discours de S^r de Menin, Hague Archives MS.

It is true that I should not wish the Spaniard so near me if he should be my enemy. But why should I not live in peace, if we were to be friends to each other? At the commencement of my reign we lived honorably together, the King of Spain and I, and he even asked me to marry him, and, after that, we lived a long time very peacefully, without any attempt having been made against my life. If we both choose, we can continue so to do.

“On the other hand, I sent you the Earl of Leicester, as lieutenant of my forces, and my intention was that he should have exact knowledge of your finances and contributions. But, on the contrary, he has never known anything about them, and you have handled them in your own manner and amongst yourselves. You have given him the title of governor, in order, under this name, to cast all your evils on his head. That title he accepted against my will, by doing which he ran the risk of *losing his life*, and his estates, and the grace and favor of his princess, which was more important to him than all. But he did it in order to maintain your tottering state. And what authority, I pray you, have you given him? A shadowy authority, a purely imaginary one. This is but mockery. He is, at any rate, a gentleman, a man of honor and of counsel. You had no right to treat him thus. If I had accepted the title which you wished to give me, by the living God, I would not have suffered you so to treat me.

“But you are so badly advised that, when there is a man of worth who discovers your tricks, you wish him ill and make an outcry against him; and yet some of you in order to save your money, and others in the hope of bribes, have been favoring the Spaniard and doing

very wicked work. No, believe me that God will punish those who for so great a benefit wish to return me so much evil. Believe boldly, too, that the King of Spain will never trust men who have abandoned the party to which they belonged, and from which they have received so many benefits, and will never believe a word of what they promise him. Yet, in order to cover up their filth, they spread the story that the Queen of England is thinking of treating for peace without their knowledge. No, I would rather be dead than that any one should have occasion to say that I had not kept my promise. But princes must listen to both sides, and that can be done without breach of faith.¹ For they transact business in a certain way, and with a princely intelligence, such as private persons cannot imitate.²

“You are states, to be sure, but private individuals in regard to princes. Certainly I would never choose to do anything without your knowledge, and I would never allow the authority which you have among yourselves, nor your privileges, nor your statutes, to be infringed. Nor will I allow you to be perturbed in your consciences. What, then, would you more of me? You have issued a proclamation in your country that no one is to talk of peace. Very well, very good. But permit princes likewise to do as they shall think best for the security of their state, provided it does you no injury. Among us princes we are not wont to make such long orations as

¹ “Et encores que les princes oyent aucunes fois l'ung et l'autre, cela se peult faire sans . . .” There is a broken sentence here in the original, which seems to require a phrase similar to the one which I have supplied. (Réponse, etc., just cited.)

² “Car ils besoignent avecq une maniere de faire et intelligence des princes, ce que les particuliers ne scauroient faire.”—Ibid.

you do, but you ought to be content with the few words that we bestow upon you, and make yourself quiet thereby.¹

“If I ever do anything for you again, I choose to be treated more honorably. I shall therefore appoint some personages of my council to communicate with you. And, in the first place, I choose to hear and see for myself what has taken place already, and have satisfaction about that, before I make any reply to what you have said to me as to greater assistance. And so I will leave you to-day, without troubling you further.”²

With this her Majesty swept from the apartment, leaving the deputies somewhat astounded at the fierce but adroit manner in which the tables had for a moment been turned upon them.

It was certainly a most unexpected blow, this charge of the states having left the English soldiers, whose numbers the queen had so suddenly multiplied by three, unpaid and unfed. Those Englishmen who, as individuals, had entered the states' service had been, like all the other troops, regularly paid. This distinctly appeared from the statements of her own councilors and generals.³ On the other hand, the queen's contingent, now dwindled to about half their original number, had been notoriously unpaid for nearly six months.

This has already been made sufficiently clear from the

¹ “Entre nous princes nous ne scavons ainsi orer comme vous faictes, mais vous devriez estre contentz avecq ce peu de parolles qui'on vous diet, et vous assurer la dessus.”—Réponse, etc., just cited.

² Ibid. Compare Bor, ii. xxii. 873, 874; Wagenaer, viii. 193, 194.

³ Memorial given by Wilkes to Sir R. Williams, February, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

private letters of most responsible persons. That these soldiers were starving, deserting, and pillaging was, alas! too true; but the envoys of the states hardly expected to be censured by her Majesty because she had neglected to pay her own troops. It was one of the points concerning which they had been especially enjoined to complain, that the English cavalry, converted into highwaymen by want of pay, had been plundering the peasantry,¹ and we have seen that Thomas Wilkes had "pawned his carcass" to provide for their temporary relief.

With regard to the insinuation that prominent personages in the country had been tampered with by the enemy, the envoys were equally astonished by such an attack. The great Deventer treason had not yet been heard of in England, for it had occurred only a week before this first interview; but something of the kind was already feared, for the slippery dealings of Yorke and Stanley with Tassis and Parma had long been causing painful anxiety, and had formed the subject of repeated remonstrances on the part of the states to

¹ "Les compagnies Anglaises," wrote the States-General to Leicester, "tant de cheval que de pied à la charge de S. Majesté, ayans delaissé les frontières se sont jectez en Hollande, ou ils foulent et mangent le bon homme soubz pretexte qu'ils disent n'avoir reçu auleun payement en cinq mois, ce que cause grande alteration pardessus l'amoidrissement des contributions du Plat Pays. Et comme ils tiennent journellement plusieurs propos estranges contre la dite province d'Hollande, et qu'ils y veulent pourchasser leur payement, a esté trouvé bon de les faire contenir ou ils sont," etc.—States-General to Leicester, March 1, 1587, Hague Archives MS.

The statements of Wilkes to his government, of like import, have been given in the notes on preceding pages.

Leicester and to the queen. The deputies were hardly prepared, therefore, to defend their own people against dealing privately with the King of Spain. The only man suspected of such practices was Leicester's own favorite and financier, Jacques Reingault, whom the earl had persisted in employing against the angry remonstrances of the states, who believed him to be a Spanish spy; and the man was now in prison, and threatened with capital punishment.

To suppose that Buys or Barneveldt, Roorda, Meetkerken, or any other leading statesman in the Netherlands, was contemplating a private arrangement with Philip II., was as ludicrous a conception as to imagine Walsingham a pensioner of the pope, or Cecil in league with the Duke of Guise. The end and aim of the states party was war. In war they not only saw the safety of the Reformed religion, but the only means of maintaining the commercial prosperity of the commonwealth. The whole correspondence of the times shows that no politician in the country dreamed of peace, either by public or secret negotiation. On the other hand, as will be made still clearer than ever, the queen was longing for peace, and was treating for peace at that moment through private agents, quite without the knowledge of the states, and in spite of her indignant disavowals in her speech to the envoys.

Yet if Elizabeth could have had the privilege of entering, as we are about to do, into the private cabinet of that excellent King of Spain, with whom she had once been such good friends, who had even sought her hand in marriage, and with whom she saw no reason whatever why she should not live at peace, she might have modified her expressions on this subject. Certainly, if she could have looked through the piles of papers, as we

intend to do, which lay upon that library table far beyond the seas and mountains, she would have perceived some objections to the scheme of living at peace with that diligent letter-writer.

Perhaps, had she known how the subtle Farnese was about to express himself concerning the fast-approaching execution of Mary and the as inevitably impending destruction of "that Englishwoman" through the schemes of his master and himself, she would have paid less heed to the sentiments, couched in most exquisite Italian, which Alexander was at the same time whispering in her ear, and would have taken less offense at the blunt language of the States-General.

Nevertheless, for the present, Elizabeth would give no better answer than the hot-tempered one which had already somewhat discomfited the deputies.

Two days afterward the five envoys had an interview with several members of her Majesty's council in the private apartment of the lord treasurer in Greenwich Palace. Burghley, being indisposed, was lying upon his bed. Leicester, Admiral Lord Howard, Lord Hunsdon, Sir Christopher Hatton, Lord Buckhurst, and Secretary Davison were present, and the lord treasurer proposed that the conversation should be in Latin, that being the common language most familiar to them all.¹ Then, turning over the leaves of the report, a copy of which lay on his bed, he asked the envoys whether, in case her Majesty had not sent over the assistance which she had done under the Earl of Leicester, their country would not have been utterly ruined.

¹ Rapport de la Légation. Conférence des Députés avec les Commissaires de S. M., February 7 (17), 1587, Hague Archives MS.

"To all appearance, yes," replied Menin.

"But," continued Burghley, still running through the pages of the document, and here and there demanding an explanation of an obscure passage or two, "you are now proposing to her Majesty to send ten thousand foot and two thousand horse, and to lend sixty thousand pounds. This is altogether monstrous and excessive. *Nobody will ever dare even to speak to her Majesty* on the subject. When you first came in 1585, you asked for twelve thousand men, but you were fully authorized to accept six thousand. No doubt that is the case now."¹

"On that occasion," answered Menin, "our main purpose was to induce her Majesty to accept the sovereignty, or at least the perpetual protection, of our country. Failing in that, we broached the third point, and not being able to get twelve thousand soldiers, we compounded for five thousand, the agreement being subject to ratification by our principals. We gave ample security in shape of the mortgaged cities. But experience has shown us that these forces and this succor are insufficient. We have therefore been sent to beg her Majesty to make up the contingent to the amount originally requested."

"But we are obliged to increase the garrisons in the cautionary towns," said one of the English councilors, "as eight hundred men in a city like Flushing are very little."

"Pardon me," replied Falck; "the burghers are not enemies, but friends to her Majesty and to the English nation. They are her dutiful subjects, like all the inhabitants of the Netherlands."

"It is quite true," said Burghley, after having made

¹ Rapport de la Légation, etc., before cited.

some critical remarks upon the military system of the provinces, "and a very common adage, *quod tunc tua res agitur, paries cum proximus ardet*, but, nevertheless, this war principally concerns you. Therefore you are bound to do your utmost to meet its expenses in your own country, quite as much as a man who means to build a house is expected to provide the stone and timber himself. But the states have not done their best. They have not at the appointed time come forward with their extraordinary contributions for the last campaign. How many men," he asked, "are required for garrisons in all the fortresses and cities, and for the field?"

"But," interposed Lord Hunsdon, "not half so many men are needed in the garrisons, for the burghers ought to be able to defend their own cities. Moreover, it is probable that your ordinary *contributions might be continued and doubled and even tripled.*"¹

"And on the whole," observed the lord admiral, "don't you think that *the putting an army in the field* might be dispensed with for this year? Her Majesty at present must get together and equip a fleet of war-vessels against the King of Spain, which will be an excessively large pennyworth, besides the assistance which she gives her neighbors."

"Yes, indeed," said Secretary Davison; "it would be difficult to exaggerate the enormous expense which her Majesty must encounter this year for defending and liberating her own kingdoms against the King of Spain. That monarch is making great naval preparations, and is treating all Englishmen in the most hostile manner. We are on the brink of declared war with Spain, with the French king, who is arresting all English persons

¹ MS. Report last cited.

and property within his kingdom, and with Scotland, all which countries are understood to have made a league together on *account of the Queen of Scotland, whom it will be absolutely necessary to put to death in order to preserve the life of her Majesty*, and are about to make war upon England. This matter then will cost us, the current year, at least eight hundred thousand pounds sterling. Nevertheless, her Majesty is sure to assist you so far as her means allow; and I, for my part, will do my best to keep her Majesty well disposed to your cause, even as I have ever done, as you well know.”¹

Thus spoke poor Davison, but a few days before the fatal 8th of February, little dreaming that the day for his influencing the disposition of her Majesty would soon be gone, and that he was himself to be crushed forever by the blow which was about to destroy the captive queen. The political combinations resulting from the tragedy were not to be exactly as he foretold, but there is little doubt that in him the Netherlands and Leicester and the Queen of England were to lose an honest, diligent, and faithful friend.

“Well, gentlemen,” said the lord treasurer, after a few more questions concerning the financial abilities of the states had been asked and answered, “it is getting late into the evening, and time for you all to get back to London. Let me request you, as soon as may be, to draw up some articles in writing, to which we will respond immediately.”²

Menin then, in the name of the deputies, expressed thanks for the urbanity shown them in the conference, and spoke of the deep regret with which they had perceived, by her Majesty’s answer two days before, that she

¹ MS. Report last cited.

² Ibid.

was so highly offended with them and with the States-General. He then, notwithstanding Burghley's previous hint as to the lateness of the hour, took up the queen's answer point by point, contradicted all its statements, appealing frequently to Lord Leicester for confirmation of what he advanced, and concluded by begging the councilors to defend the cause of the Netherlands to her Majesty. Burghley requested them to make an excuse or reply to the queen in writing, and send it to him to present.¹

Thus the conference terminated, and the envoys returned to London. They were fully convinced by the result of these interviews, as they told their constituents, that her Majesty, by false statements and reports of persons either grossly ignorant or not having the good of the commonwealth before their eyes, had been very incorrectly informed as to the condition of the provinces, and of the great efforts made by the States-General to defend their country against the enemy. It was obvious, they said, that their measures had been exaggerated in order to deceive the queen and her council.²

And thus statements and counter-statements, protocols and apostils, were glibly exchanged, the heap of diplomatic rubbish was rising higher and higher, and the councilors and envoys, pleased with their work, were growing more and more amicable, when the court was suddenly startled by the news of the Deventer and Zutphen treason. The intelligence was accompanied by the famous 4th of February letter, which descended like a bombshell in the midst of the decorous council-chamber. Such language had rarely been addressed to the Earl of

¹ MS. Report last cited. Compare Bor, ii. xxii. 875-877 seq.

² MS. Report, February 9 (19), 1587, before cited.

Leicester, and, through him, to the imperious sovereign herself, as the homely truths with which Barneveldt, speaking with the voice of the States-General, now smote the delinquent governor.

“My lord,” said he, “it is notorious, and needs no illustration whatever, with what true confidence and unfeigned affection we received your Excellency in our land; the States-General, the States-Provincial, the magistrates, and the communities of the chief cities in the United Provinces, all uniting to do honor to her Serene Majesty of England and to yourself, and to confer upon you the government-general over us. And although we should willingly have placed some limitations upon the authority thus bestowed on you, in order that by such a course your own honor and the good and constitutional condition of the country might be alike preserved, yet finding your Excellency not satisfied with those limitations, we postponed every objection, and conformed ourselves to your pleasure. Yet, before coming to that decision, we had well considered that by doing so we might be opening a door to many ambitious, avaricious, and pernicious persons, both of these countries and from other nations, who might seize the occasion to advance their own private profits, to the detriment of the country and the dishonor of your Excellency.

“And, in truth, such persons have done their work so efficiently as to inspire you with distrust against the most faithful and capable men in the provinces, against the States General and Provincial, magistrates, and private persons, knowing very well that they could never arrive at their own ends so long as you were guided by the constitutional authorities of the country. And precisely upon the distrust thus created as a foundation

they raised a backstairs council, by means of which they were able to further their ambitious, avaricious, and seditious practices, notwithstanding the good advice and remonstrances of the council of state and the States General and Provincial.”¹

He proceeded to handle the subjects of the English rose-noble, put in circulation by Leicester's finance or backstairs council at two florins above its value, to the manifest detriment of the provinces; of the detestable embargo which had prevented them from using the means bestowed upon them by God himself to defend their country; of the squandering and embezzlement of the large sums contributed by the provinces and intrusted to the earl's administration; of the starving condition of the soldiers, maltreated by government, and thus compelled to prey upon the inhabitants, so that troops in the states' service had never been so abused during the whole war, although the states had never before voted such large contributions nor paid them so promptly; of the placing in posts of high honor and trust men of notoriously bad character and even Spanish spies; of the taking away the public authority from those to whom it legitimately belonged, and conferring it on incompetent and unqualified persons; of the illegal banishment of respectable citizens; of the violation of time-honored laws and privileges; of the shameful attempts to repudiate the ancient authority of the states, and to usurp a control over the communities and nobles by them represented; and of the perpetual efforts to foster dissension, disunion, and rebellion among the

¹ Lettre des États à Leycestre, February 4, 1587, Hague Archives MS. Compare Bor, ii. xxii. 944 seq.; Wagenaer, viii. 202; Le Petit, ii. xiv. 541.

inhabitants. Having thus drawn up a heavy bill of indictment, nominally against the earl's illegal counselors, but in reality against the earl himself, he proceeded to deal with the most important matter of all.

“The principal cities and fortresses in the country have been placed in hands of men suspected by the states on legitimate grounds—men who had been convicted of treason against these provinces, and who continued to be suspected, notwithstanding that your Excellency had pledged your own honor for their fidelity. Finally, by means of these scoundrels,¹ it was brought to pass that, the council of state having been invested by your Excellency with supreme authority during your absence, a secret document was brought to light after your departure, by which the most substantial matters, and those most vital to the defense of the country, were withdrawn from the disposition of that council. And now, alas! we see the effects of these practices.

“Sir William Stanley, by you appointed governor of Deventer, and Rowland Yorke, governor of Fort Zutphen, have refused, by virtue of that secret document, to acknowledge any authority in this country. And notwithstanding that since your departure they and their soldiers have been supported at our expense, and had just received a full month's pay from the states, they have traitorously and villainously delivered the city and the fortress to the enemy, with a declaration made by Stanley that he did the deed to ease his conscience, and to render to the King of Spain the city which of right was belonging to him. And this is a crime so dishonorable, scandalous, ruinous, and treasonable, as that, during this whole war, we have never seen the like.

¹ “Gibier.”—MS. last cited.

And we are now in daily fear lest the English commanders in Bergen-op-Zoom, Ostend, and other cities should commit the same crime. And although we fully suspected the designs of Stanley and Yorke, yet your Excellency's secret document had deprived us of the power to act.

"We doubt not that her Majesty and your Excellency will think this strange language. But we can assure you that we, too, think it strange and grievous that those places should have been confided to such men, against our repeated remonstrances, and that, moreover, this very Stanley should have been recommended by your Excellency for general of all the forces. And although we had many just and grave reasons for opposing your administration,—even as our ancestors were often wont to rise against the sovereigns of the country,—we have, nevertheless, patiently suffered for a long time, in order not to diminish your authority, which we deemed so important to our welfare, and in the hope that you would at last be moved by the perilous condition of the commonwealth, and awake to the artifices of your advisers.

"But at last—feeling that the existence of the state can no longer be preserved without proper authority, and that the whole community is full of emotion and distrust on account of these great treasons—we the States-General, as well as the States-Provincial, have felt constrained to establish such a government as we deem meet for the emergency. And of this we think proper to apprise your Excellency."

He then expressed the conviction that all these evil deeds had been accomplished against the intentions of the earl and the English government, and requested his Excellency so to deal with her Majesty that the contingent

of horse and foot hitherto accorded by her "might be maintained in good order and in better pay."

Here, then, was substantial choleric phraseology, as good plain-speaking as her Majesty had just been employing, and with quite as sufficient cause. Here was no pleasant diplomatic fencing, but straightforward, vigorous thrusts. It was no wonder that poor Wilkes should have thought the letter "too sharp," when he heard it read in the assembly, and that he should have done his best to prevent it from being despatched. He would have thought it sharper could he have seen how the pride of her Majesty and of Leicester was wounded by it to the quick. Her list of grievances against the states seem to vanish into air. Who had been tampering with the Spaniards now? Had that "shadowy and imaginary authority" granted to Leicester not proved substantial enough? Was it the States-General, the state council, or was it the "absolute governor," who had carried off the supreme control of the commonwealth in his pocket, that was responsible for the ruin effected by Englishmen who had scorned all "authority" but his own?

The states, in another blunt letter to the queen herself, declared the loss of Deventer to be more disastrous to them than even the fall of Antwerp had been; for the Republic had now been split asunder, and its most ancient and vital portions almost cut away. Nevertheless, they were not "dazzled nor despairing," they said, but more determined than ever to maintain their liberties and bid defiance to the Spanish tyrant. And again they demanded of, rather than implored, her Majesty to be true to her engagements with them.¹

¹ "Car si la perte d'Anvers a esté tres grande pour toute le pays, ceste cy tire avec soi plus grande consequence, tout au regard de

The interviews which followed were more tempestuous than ever. "I had intended that my Lord of Leicester should return to you," she said to the envoys; "but that shall never be. He has been treated with gross ingratitude; he has served the provinces with ability, he has consumed his own property there, he has risked his life, he has lost his near kinsman, Sir Philip Sydney, whose life I should be glad to purchase with many millions, and, in place of all reward, he receives these venomous letters, of which a copy has been sent to his sovereign to blacken him with her." She had been advising him to return, she added, but she was now resolved that he should never set foot in the provinces again.¹

Here the earl, who was present, exclaimed, beating himself on the breast, "A tali officio libera nos, Domine!"²

But the states, undaunted by these explosions of wrath, replied that it had ever been their custom, when their laws and liberties were invaded, to speak their mind boldly to kings and governors, and to procure redress of their grievances, as became freemen.³

plusieurs autres villes circumvoisines de Deventer, lesquelles ne pourront estre avietuaillees que par force, que aultrement. Non pas que nous disons cesq comme esblouys et par desespoir. . . . Car nous ne manquerons jamais en nos premieres resolutions de nous vouloir maintenir contre le Roi d'Espagne, pour la conservation de la religion Chrestienne, nos privileges, franchises, et libertés."—States-General to the queen, February 6, 1587, Hague Archives MS.

¹ Bor, ii. xxii. 949.

² Ibid.

³ "Nous sommes accoustumez, comme aussi ont ete nos predecesseurs, de remonstrer a nos princes et gouverneurs librement des desordres et contraventions que nous trouvons contre nos privileges et libertés, comme avons fait a V. E. etant ici, —ce que nous

During that whole spring the queen was at daggers drawn with all her leading councilors, mainly in regard to that great question of questions, the relations of England with the Netherlands and Spain. Walsingham—who felt it madness to dream of peace, and who believed it the soundest policy to deal with Parma and his veterans upon the soil of Flanders, with the forces of the Republic for allies, rather than to await his arrival in London—was driven almost to frenzy by what he deemed the queen's perverseness.

“Our sharp words continue,” said the secretary, “which doth greatly disquiet her Majesty, and discomfort her poor servants that attend her. The lord treasurer remaineth still in disgrace, and, behind my back, her Majesty giveth out very hard speeches of myself, which I the rather credit, for that I find, in dealing with her, I am nothing gracious; and if her Majesty could be otherwise served, I know I should not be used. . . . Her Majesty doth wholly lend herself to devise some further means to disgrace her poor council, in respect whereof she neglecteth all other causes. . . . The discord between her Majesty and her council hindereth the necessary consultations that were to be destined for the preventing of the manifold perils that hang over this realm. . . . Sir Christopher Hatton hath dealt very plainly and dutifully with her, which hath been accepted in so evil part as he is resolved to retire for a time. I assure you I find every man weary of attendance here. . . . I would to God I could find as good resolution in her Majesty to proceed in a princely

avons toujours tenu etre de notre devoir et vrai moyen pour parvenir au redres des dites desordres,” etc.—States-General to Leicester, March 1, 1587, Hague Archives MS.

course in relieving the United Provinces as I find an honorable disposition in your Lordship to employ yourself in their service." ¹

The lord treasurer was much puzzled, very wretched, but philosophically resigned. "Why her Majesty useth me thus strangely, I know not," he observed. "To some she saith that she meant not I should have gone from the court; to some she saith, she may not admit me, nor give me contentment. I shall dispose myself to enjoy God's favor, and shall do nothing to deserve her disfavor. And if I be suffered to be a stranger to her affairs, I shall have a quieter life." ²

Leicester, after the first burst of his anger was over, was willing to return to the provinces. He protested that he had a greater affection for the Netherland people—not for the governing powers—even than he felt for the people of England. ³ "There is nothing sticks in my stomach," he said, "but the good will of that poor, afflicted people, for whom, I take God to record, I could be content to lose any limb I have to do them good." ⁴ But he was crippled with debt, and the queen resolutely refused to lend him a few thousand pounds, without which he could not stir. Walsingham in vain did battle with her parsimony, representing how urgently and vividly the necessity of his return had been depicted by all her ministers in both countries, and how much it imported to her own safety and service. But she was

¹ Walsingham to Leicester, April 3, 1587. Same to same, April 10, 1587. Brit. Museum, Galba, c. xi. pp. 315-319.

² Burghley to Leicester, April 16, 1587, Brit. Museum, Galba, c. xi. p. 333.

³ Bor, ii. xxii. 950-952.

⁴ Leicester to Walsingham, April 16, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

obdurate. "She would rather," he said bitterly to Leicester, "hazard the increase of confusion there, which may put the whole country in peril, than supply your want. The like course she holdeth in the rest of her causes, which maketh me to wish myself from the helm."¹ At last she agreed to advance him ten thousand pounds, but on so severe conditions that the earl declared himself heartbroken again, and protested that he would

¹ "For the ten thousand pounds for your particular," said Walsingham, "I have dealt very earnestly, but cannot prevail to win her Majesty to assent thereunto. I caused Mr. Barker to set down a note of your mortgages that stand upon forfeiture for lack of this promised support of the ten thousand pounds, wherewith she has been made acquainted, but not moved thereby to relieve you."—Walsingham to Leicester, April 6, 1587, Brit. Museum, Galba, c. xi. p. 323, MS.

And again, two days later: "I am sorry that her Majesty sticketh with you for the loan, for I see, without your return, both the cause and many an honest man that have showed them most constantly affected to you will go to ruin. I wish you had it, though it were for but two months. The enemy is not like to attempt any great matter in respect of his wants. But I am most sorry to see so great an advantage lost as her Majesty might have had, in case she had been induced to contribute toward the putting an army into the field."—Same to same, April 8, 1587, *ibid.*, pp. 321-331, MS.

And once more, a week afterward: "She can be content to furnish you with ten thousand pounds, so as you would devise, out of her entertainment and the states', to pay her in one year the said sum, which she saith you promised unto herself, and therefore willed me to write to you to know whether you can make repayment in such order as she requireth."—Same to same, April 14, 1587, *ibid.*, p. 326.

There was not much sentiment between the "throned vestal" and "sweet Robin" when pounds and shillings were discussed; and it will be seen that the earl was rendered quite frantic by the screwing process to which he found himself subjected by her whose "blessed beams" had formerly been so "nutritious."

neither accept the money nor ever set foot in the Netherlands. "Let Norris stay there," he said in a fury; "he will do admirably, no doubt. Only let it not be supposed that I can be there also. Not for one hundred thousand pounds would I be in that country with him."¹

Meantime it was agreed that Lord Buckhurst should be sent forth on what Wilkes termed a mission of expostulation, and a very ill-timed one. This new envoy was to inquire into the causes of the discontent, and to do his best to remove them: as if any man in England or

¹ "I perceive by your letters," said Leicester, "that her Majesty would now I should go over, and will lend me ten thousand pounds, so she may be sure to receive it back within a year. I did offer to her Majesty heretofore that she should have all I receive of her entertainment, and as much besides as shall yield her two thousand pounds, paid either one thousand pounds at Michaelmas and the other at our Lady-day, or else both at our Lady, which is less than a year; and so long as I shall receive, then her Majesty shall receive after this sort till her ten thousand pounds be paid. And this is more, I am now persuaded, than I shall be able to do, and keep any countenance fit for the place; . . . but seeing I find her Majesty's hardness continue still to me as it doth, I pray you let me your earnest and true furtherance for my abode at home and discharge; . . . for my heart is more than half broken, and I do think her Majesty had rather far continue Sir J. Norris there, in respect to the reconciliation between him and Count Holloek. . . . But I will never serve with him again as long as I live; no, not for to have one hundred thousand pounds given me. . . . I know the man too well to trust to his service. I shall have no good thereby, not if I were an angel, for he cannot obey nor almost like of an equal, . . . and already he hath taken advantage to curry favor with captains and soldiers. . . . He shall never bear sway under me; his disdain and craft hath no moderation; and I know, for all those speeches of my going, his friends make full account that he shall remain there as her Majesty's general of the forces."—Leicester to Walsingham, April 16, 1587, S. P. Office MS.

in Holland doubted as to the causes, or as to the best means of removing them ; or as if it were not absolutely certain that delay was the very worst specific that could be adopted—delay, which the Netherland statesmen, as well as the queen's wisest councilors, most deprecated, which Alexander and Philip most desired, and by indulging in which her Majesty was most directly playing into her adversary's hand. Elizabeth was preparing to put cards upon the table against an antagonist whose game was close, whose honesty was always to be suspected, and who was a consummate master in what was then considered diplomatic sleight of hand. So Lord Buckhurst was to go forth to expostulate at The Hague, while transports were loading in Cadiz and Lisbon, reiters levying in Germany, pikemen and musketeers in Spain and Italy, for a purpose concerning which Walsingham and Barneveldt had for a long time felt little doubt.

Meantime Lord Leicester went to Bath to drink the waters, and after he had drunk the waters, the queen, ever anxious for his health, was resolved that he should not lose the benefit of those salubrious draughts by traveling too soon, or by plunging anew into the fountains of bitterness which flowed perennially in the Netherlands.¹

¹ "Finding your presence here necessary," wrote Walsingham, "for the expedition of the Low Country causes, I moved her Majesty that I might be authorized in her name to hasten your repair hither, whereunto she would in no sort consent, pretending that after the use of the Bath it would be dangerous for your Lordship to take any extraordinary travail. There is some doubt that Ostend will be presently besieged," etc.—Walsingham to Leicester, April 17, 1587, Brit. Museum, Galba, c. xi. p. 327, MS.

